

GUSTAVUS VASA,

The Deliverer of his COUNTRY.

A

1507/634
T R A G E D Y.

As it was to have been acted

At the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane.

By HENRY BROOKE, Esq;

E D I N B U R G H:

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MDCCLXI.

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A PREFATORY
DEDICATION
TO THE
SUBSCRIBERS.

AS I esteemed it my happiness to live under a government, where *national liberty* was established by *law*, and the *rights* of subjects interwove with their *allegiance*; so I ever thought it my safety to act with such allowable freedom, as did not contradict any of our written and known regulations.

Tho' inconsiderable in myself, I am yet a subject of *Great Britain*; and the privileges of her meanest member are dear to the whole constitution.

Among those privileges, I claim that of justifying my conduct, I claim that of defending my property, and wish I could do both, without giving disgust even to those by whose censures I am a sufferer.

WHEN I wrote the following sheets, I had studied the ancient laws of my country, but was not conversant with her present political state. I did not consider things minutely; in the general view I liked our constitution, and zealously wished that the religion, the laws,

and liberties of *England* might ever be sacred and safe. I had nothing to fear or hope from party or preferment. My attachments were only to truth; I was conscious of no other principles, and was far from apprehending that such could be offensive.

I took my subject from the history of *Sweden*, one of those *Gothic* and *glorious* nations, from whom our form of government is derived, from whom *Britain* has inherited those unextinguishable *sparks* of liberty and patriotism, that were her *light* thro' the ages of ignorance and superstition. Her *flaming* sword turned every way against invasion; and that *vital heat* which has so often preserved her, so often restored her from intestine malignities. Those are the *sparks*, the *gems*, that alone give true ornament and brightness to the crown of a *British* monarch; that give him freely to reign over the free; and shall ever set him above the princes of the earth; till corruption grow universal; till subjects wish to be slaves, and kings know not how to be happy.

I was pleased with this similitude between the principles, and, as I may say, between the natural constitutions of *Sweden* and *Britain*. I looked no further for sentiments, than as they arose from facts, and for the facts I am indebted to history. Nay, I ingenuously confess, I was so far from a view of merit with the disaffected, that I looked on this performance as the highest compliment I could pay the present establishment. — Such was my ignorance, or such is my misfortune.



MANY

A PREFATORY DEDICATION.

v

MANY are the difficulties a new author has to encounter in introducing his play on the stage. I had the good fortune to surmount them; this piece was about five weeks in rehearsal, the day was appointed for acting, I had disposed of many hundred tickets, and imagined I had nothing to fear but from the weakness of the performance.

BUT then it was, that where I looked for approbation, I met with repulse. I was condemned and punished in my works without being accused of any crime, and made obnoxious to the government under which I live, without having it in my power to alter my conduct, or knowing in what instance I had given offence.

HOWEVER singular and unprecedented this treatment may appear; had I conceived it to be the intention of the legislature, I should have submitted without complaining. Or had any, among hundreds who have perused the manuscript, observed but a single line that might inadvertently tend to sedition or immorality, I would then have been the first to strike it out, I would now be the last to publish it.

HAD the dignity of the Ld C——n's office condescended, as some would insinuate, to a *theatrical* examination of the *drama*, to a *critical* *inquisition* of the *conduct*, the *unities*, and *tricks* of *scenery*, even so I might have hoped for equal indulgence with farces, pantomimes, and other performances of like taste and genius.

BUT this is not the case; the Ld C——n's office is alone concerned in those reasons which

gave birth to the statute, it is to guard against such representations as he may conceive to be of pernicious influence in the commonwealth; this is the only point to which his prohibitions are understood to extend, and his prohibition lays me under the necessity of publishing this piece, to convince the public, that (tho' of no valuable consequence) I am at least inoffensive.

Patriotism, or the love of country, is the great and single *moral* which I had in view thro' this play. This *love* (so superior in its nature to all other interests and affections) is personated in the character of *Gustavus*. It is the *love* of *national welfare*; *national welfare* is *national liberty*; and he alone can be conscious of it, he alone can contribute to the support of it, who is *personally free*.

By *personal freedom* I mean that state resulting from *virtue*; or *reason* ruling in the breast superior to appetite and passion; and by *national freedom* I mean a security (arising from the nature of a well-ordered constitution) for those advantages and privileges that each man has a right to, by contributing as a member to the weal of the community.

THE monarch or head of such a constitution, is as the father of a large and well-regulated family; his subjects are not servants, but sons; their care, their affections, their attachments are reciprocal, and their interest is one, is not to be divided.

THIS is truly to reign; this only is to reign. How glorious, how extensive is the prerogative

prerogative of such a monarch ! he is superior to subjects, each of whom is equal to any monarch, who is only superior to slaves. He is sceptered in the hearts of his people, from whence he directs their hands with double force and energy. His office partakes of the DIVINE INCLINATION, by being exerted to no other end, but the happiness of a people.

O, never may any subtilties, any insinuations raise groundless jealousies in a people so governed ! never may they be influenced to imagine that such a prince is invading their rights, while he is only solicitous to confirm and preserve them !

AND never may any ministry, any adulation, seduce such a prince from that his true interest and honour !

I should not have had the assurance to solicit a subscription in favour of sentiments that any circumstance could ever make me retract. These, and these only, are the principles of which you are patrons ; and the honourable names prefixed to this performance lay me under such a future obligation of conduct, as shall ever make me cautious of forfeiting the advantages I receive from them. They are also to me a lasting memorial of that gratitude with which I am,

Your most obliged, most faithful,

and most humble servant,

HENRY BROOKE.



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P R O L O G U E.

Britons ! *this night presents a state distress'd,
Tho' brave, yet vanquish'd; and tho' great,
oppress'd;*

*Vice, rav'ning vulture, on her vitals prey'd,
Her peers, her prelates, sell corruption sway'd;
Their rights, for pow'r, th' ambitious weakly sold,
The wealthy, poorly, for superfluous gold;
Hence wasting ills, hence sev'ring factions rose,
And gave large entrance to invading foes;
Truth, justice, honour fled th' infected shore,
For freedom, sacred freedom was no more.*

*Then, greatly rising in his country's right,
Her hero, her deliverer sprung to light;
A race of hardy, northern sons he led,
Guiltless of courts, untainted, and unread,
Whose inborn spirit spurn'd th' ignoble fee,
Whose hands scorn'd bondage, for their hearts were
free.*

*Ask ye what law their conqu'ring cause confess'd?
Great nature's law, the law within the breast,
Form'd by no art, and to no sect confin'd,
But stamp'd by heav'n upon th' unletter'd mind.*

*Such, such, of old, the first-born natives were,
Who breath'd the virtues of Britannia's air,
Their realm, when mighty Cæsar vainly fought;
For mightier freedom against Cæsar fought,
And rudely drove the sam'd invader home,
To tyrannize o'er polish'd — venal Rome.*

*Our bard, exalted in a free-born flame,
To ev'ry nation wou'd transfer this claim.
He to no state, no climate bounds his page,
He bids the moral beam thro' every age;
Then be your judgment gen'rous as his plan,
Ye sons of freedom! — save the friend of man.*

The

The CHARACTERS.

M E N.

CRISTIERN, King of <i>Denmark</i> and <i>Norway</i> , and usurper of <i>Sweden</i> ,	}	Mr <i>Wright</i> .
TROLLIO, a <i>Swede</i> , Archbishop of <i>Upsal</i> , and vicegerent of <i>Cristi-ern</i> ,		
PETERSON, a <i>Swedish</i> Nobleman, secretly of the <i>Danish</i> party, and friend to <i>Trollio</i> ,	}	Mr <i>Turbutt</i> .
LAERTES, a young <i>Danish</i> Nobleman, attendant to <i>Cristina</i> ,		
GUSTAVUS, formerly general of the <i>Swedes</i> , and first cousin to the deceased King,	}	Mr <i>Quin</i> .
ARVIDA, of the royal blood of <i>Sweden</i> , friend and cousin to <i>Gustavus</i> ,		
ANDERSON, chief Lord of <i>Dalecarlia</i> ,	}	Mr <i>Mills</i> .
ARNOLDUS, a <i>Swedish</i> priest, and chaplain in the copper-mines of <i>Dalecarlia</i> ,		
SIVARD, captain of the <i>Dalecarlians</i> ,	}	Mr <i>Ridout</i> .

W O M E N.

CRISTINA, daughter to <i>Cristiern</i> ,	}	Mrs <i>Giffard</i> .
AUGUSTA, mother to <i>Gustavus</i> ,		
GUSTAVA, sister to <i>Gustavus</i> , a child,		
MARIANA, attendant and confidant to <i>Cristina</i> ,		

Soldiers, Peasants, Messengers, and Attendants.

SCENE, *Dalecarlia*, a northern province in *Sweden*.



GUSTAVUS VASA,

T H E

Deliverer of his Country.

ACT I. SCENE I.

The inside of the copper-mines in Dalecarlia.

Enter Anderson, Arnoldus, and Servants, with torches.

And. YOU tell me wonders.

Arn. Soft, behold, my Lord,
[Points behind the scenes]
Behold him stretch'd, where reigns
eternal night,

The flint his pillow, and cold damps his cov'ring;
Yet bold of spirit, and robust of limb,
He throws inclemency aside, nor feels
The lot of human frailty.

And. What horrors hang around ! the savage race
Ne'er hold their den but where some glimm'ring ray
May bring the cheer of morn — What then is he ?
His dwelling marks a secret in his soul,
And whispers somewhat more than man about him.

Arn. Draw but the veil of his apparent wretchedness,

And you shall find, his form is but assum'd
To hoard some wondrous treasure, lodg'd within.

And. Let him bear up to what thy praises speak him,
And I will win him spite of his reserve,
Bind him with sacred friendship to my soul,
And make him half myself.

Arn. 'Tis nobly promis'd ;
For worth is rare, and wants a friend in Sweden ;
And yet I tell thee, in her age of heroes,

When

When nurs'd by freedom, all her sons grew great,
 And ev'ry peasant was a prince in virtue ;
 I greatly err, or this abandon'd stranger
 Had stepp'd the first for fame — tho' now he seeks
 To veil his name, and cloud his shine of virtues ;
 For there is danger in them.

And. True, *Arnoldus*.

Were there a prince throughout the scepter'd globe,
 Who search'd out merit for its due preferment,
 With half that care our tyrant seeks it out
 For ruin ; happy, happy were that state,
 Beyond the golden fable of those pure
 And earliest ages — wherefore this, good heav'n ?
 Is it of fate, that who assumes a crown
 Throws off humanity ?

Arn. So *Cristiern* holds.

He claims our country as by right of conquest,
 A right to ev'ry wrong. Ev'n now 'tis said,
 The tyrant envies what our mountains yield
 Of health or aliment ; he comes upon us,
 Attended by a num'rous host, to seize
 These last retreats of our expiring liberty.

And. Say'st thou ?

Arn. This rising day, this instant hour,
 Thus chas'd, we stand upon the utmost brink
 Of steep perdition, and must leap the precipice,
 Or turn upon our hunters.

And. Now, *Gustavus*.

Thou prop and glory of inglorious *Sweden*,
 Where art thou, mightiest man ? — Were he but here
 I'll tell thee, my *Arnoldus*, I beheld him,
 Then when he first drew sword, serene and dreadful,
 As the brow'd evening ere the thunder brake ;
 For soon he made it toilsome to our eyes
 To mark his speed, and trace the paths of conquest ;
 In vain he follow'd, where he swept the field ;
 'Twas death alone could wait upon *Gustavus*.

Arn. He was indeed whate'er our wish could form
 him.

And. Array'd and beauteous in the blood of Danes,
 Th' invaders of his country, thrice he chased

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SC. I. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 13

This *Cristiern*, this fell conq'rer, this usurper,
With rout and foul dishonour at his heels,
To plunge his head in *Denmark*.

Arn. Nor ever had the tyrant known return,
To tread our necks, and blend us with the dust ;
Had he not dar'd to break thro' ev'ry law
That sanctifies the nations, seiz'd our hero,
The pledge of specious treaty, tore him from us,
And led him chain'd to *Denmark*.

And. Then we fell.
If still he lives, we yet may learn to rise ;
But never can I dare to rest a hope
On any arm but his.

Arn. And yet I trust,
This stranger that delights to dwell with darkness
Unknown, unfriended, compass'd round with wretchedness,
Conceals some mighty purpose in his breast,
Now lab'ring into birth.

And. When came he hither ?

Arn. Six moons have chang'd upon the face of night,
Since here he first arriv'd, in servile weeds,
But yet of mien majestic. I observ'd him,
And ever as I gaz'd, some nameless charm,
A wondrous greatness not to be conceal'd,
Broke thro' his form, and aw'd my soul before him.
Amid these mines he earns the hireling's portion ;
His hands out-toil the hind, while on his brow
Sits patience, bathed in the laborious drop
Of painful Industry — I oft have sought,
With friendly tender of some worthier service,
To win him from his temper ; but he shuns
All offers, yet declined with graceful act,
Engaging beyond utt'rance ; and at eve,
When all retire to some domestic solace,
He only stays, and, as you see, the earth
Receives him to her dark and cheerless bosom.

And. Has no unwary moment e'er betray'd
The labours of his soul, some fav'rite grief,
Whereon to raise conjecture ?

Arn. I saw, as some bold peasants late deplor'd
Their country's bondage, sudden passion seiz'd

And

14 G U S T A V U S V A S A, Act I.

And bore him from his seeming ; strait his form
Was turn'd to terror, ruin fill'd his eye,
And his proud step appear'd to awe the world :
When check'd as thro' an impotence of rage,
Damp sadness soon usurp'd upon his brow,
And the big tear roll'd graceful down his visage.

And. Your words imply a man of much importance.

Arr. So I suspected, and at dead of night
Stole on his slumbers ; his full heart was busy,
And oft his tongue pronounc'd the hated name
Of — bloody *Cristiern* — there he seem'd to pause :
And recollected to one voice, he cry'd,
O *Sweden* ! O my country ! yet I'll save thee.

And. Forbear — he rises — heav'n's, what majesty

S C E N E II.

Enter Gustavus.

And. Your pardon, stranger, if the voice of virtue,
If cordialamity from man to man,
And somewhat that should whisper to the soul,
'To seek and cheer the sufferer, led me hither
Impatient to salute thee. Be it thine
Alone to point the path of friendship out ;
And my best pow'r shall wait upon thy fortunes.

Gust. Yes, gen'rous man ! there is a wondrous tell
'The truest, worthiest, noblest cause for friendship ;
Dearer than life, than int'rest, or alliance,
And equal to your virtues.

And. Say — unfold.

Gust. Art thou a soldier, a chief lord in *Sweden*,
And yet a stranger to thy country's voice,
'That loudly calls the hidden patriot forth ?
But what's a soldier ? what's a lord in *Sweden* ?
All worth is fled, or fall'n — nor has a life
Been spar'd, but for dishonour ; spar'd to breed
More slaves for *Denmark*, to beget a race
Of new-born virgins for th' unsated lust
Of our new masters. *Sweden* ! thou'rt no more !

Sc. 2.

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SC. 2. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 15

Queen of the north ! thy land of liberty,
Thy house of heroes, and thy seat of virtues
Is now the tomb, where thy brave sons lie speechless,
And foreign snakes engender.

And. O 'tis true.

But wherefore ? to what purpose ?

Gust. Think of *Stockholm* !

When *Cristiern* seized upon the hour of peace,
And drench'd the hospitable floor with blood ;
Then fell the flow'r of *Sweden*, mighty names !
Her hoary senators, and gasping patriots !
The tyrant spoke, and his licentious band
Of blood-train'd ministry were loos'd to ruin.
Invention wanton'd in the toil of infants
Stabb'd on the breast, or reeking on the points
Of sportive javelins. Husbands, sons, and fires
With dying ears drank in the loud despair
Of shrieking chastity. The waste of war
Was peace and friendship to this civil massacre.
O heav'n and earth ! is there a cause for this ?
For sin without temptation, calm, cool villany,
Delib'rate mischief, unimpassion'd lust,
And smiling murder ? Lie thou there, my soul,
Sleep, sleep upon it, image not the form
Of any dream but this, till time grows pregnant,
And thou canst wake to vengeance.

And. Thou'st greatly mov'd me. Ha ! thy tears
start forth.

Yes, let them flow, our country's fate demands them ;
I too will mingle mine, while yet 'tis left us
To weep in secret, and to sigh with safety.
But wherefore talk of vengeance ? 'tis a word
Should be ingraven on the new-fall'n snow,
Where the first beam may melt it from observance.
Vengeance on *Cristiern* ! *Norway* and the *Dane*,
The sons of *Sweden*, all the peopled north
Bends at his nod : my humbler boast of pow'r
Meant not to cope with crowns.

Gust. Then what remains

Is briefly this ; your friendship has my thanks,
But must not my acceptance : never — no —

First sink thou baleful mansion to the centre !
 And be thy darkness doubled round my head ;
 Ere I forsake thee for the bliss of paradise,
 To be enjoy'd beneath a tyrant's sceptre ;
 No, that were wilful slav'ry — freedom is
 The brilliant gift of heaven, 'tis reason's self,
 The kin of Deity — I will not part it.

And. Nor I, while I can hold it ; but alas !
 That is not in our choice.

Gust. Why ? where's that pow'r whose engines
 are of force

To bend the brave and virtuous man to slav'ry ?
 Base fear, the laziness of lust, gross appetites,
 These are the ladders, and the groveling footstool,
 From whence the tyrant rises on our wrongs,
 Secure and scepter'd in the soul's servility.
 He has debauch'd the genius of our country,
 And rides triumphant, while her captive sons
 Await his nod, the silken slaves of pleasure,
 Or fetter'd in their fears.

And. I apprehend you.

No doubt, a base submission to our wrongs
 May well be term'd a voluntary bondage ;
 But think the heavy hand of pow'r is on us ;
 Of pow'r, from whose imprisonment and chains
 Not all our free-born virtue can protect us.

Gust. 'Tis there you err, for I have felt their force ;
 And had I yielded to enlarge these limbs,
 Or share the tyrant's empire, on the terms
 Which he propos'd — I were a slave indeed.
 No — in the deep and deadly damp of dungeons
 The soul can rear her sceptre, smile in anguish,
 And triumph o'er oppression.

And. O glorious spirit ! think not I am slack
 To relish what thy noble scope intends,
 But then the means ! the peril ! and the consequence !
 Great are the odds, and who shall dare the trial ?

Gust. I dare.

O wert thou still that gallant chief
 Whom once I knew ! I cou'd unfold a purpose
 Would make the greatness of thy heart to swell,

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Sc. 3. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 17

And burst in the conception.

And. Give it utterance.

Perhaps there lie some embers yet in *Sweden*,
Which, waken'd by thy breath, might rise in flames,
And spread vindictive round — You say you know me ;
But give a tongue to such a cause as this,
And if you hold me tardy in the call,
You know me not — but thee I've surely known ;
For there is somewhat in that voice and form,
Which has alarm'd my soul to recollection ;
But 'tis as in a dream, and mocks my reach.

Gust. Then name the man whom it is death to
know,

Or knowing to conceal — and I am he.

And. *Gustavus* ! Heav'n's ! 'tis he ! 'tis he himself !

S C E N E III.

Enter Arvida, speaking to a servant.

Arv. I thank you, friend, he's here, you may retire.

And. Good morning to my noble guest, you're early.

[*Gustavus walks apart.*]

Arv. I come to take a short and hasty leave :

'Tis said, that from the mountain's neighb'ring brow,
The canvas of a thousand tents appears,
Whitening the vale — suppose the tyrant there ;
You know my safety lies not in the interview —
Ha ! what is he, who in the shreds of slavery
Supports a step, superior to the state,
And insolence of ermine ?

Gust. Sure that voice

Was once the voice of friendship and *Arvida* !

Arv. Ha ! yes — 'tis he ! — ye pow'rs fit is

Gustavus.

Gust. Thou brother of adoption ! In the bond
Of ev'ry virtue wedded to my soul,
Enter my heart, it is thy property.

Arv. I'm lost in joy and wondrous circumstance.

Gust. Yes, wherefore, my *Arvida*, wherefore is it

18 GUSTAVUS VASA, Act 1.

That in a place, and at a time like this,
We should thus meet? Can *Cristiern* cease from
cruelty?

Say, whence is this, my brother? How escap'd you?
Did I not leave thee in the *Danish* dungeon?

Arr. Of that hereafter. Let me view thee first.
How graceful is the garb of wretchedness!
When worn by virtue? Fashions turn to folly;
Their colours tarnish, and their pomps grow poor
To her magnificence.

Gust. Yes, my *Arvida*.
Beyond the sweeping of the proudest train
That shades a monarch's heel, I prize these weeds,
For they are sacred to my country's freedom.
A mighty enterprise has been conceiv'd,
And thou art come auspicious to the birth,
As sent to fix the seal of heav'n upon it.

Arr. Point but thy purpose — let it be to
bleed —

Gust. Your hands my friends!

All. Our hearts.

Gust. I know they're brave.
O' such the time has need, of hearts like yours,
Faithful and firm, of hands inur'd and strong;
For we must ride upon the neck of danger,
And plunge into a purpose big with death.

And. Here let us kneel and bind us to thy side.
By all —

Gust. No, hold — if we want oaths to join us,
Swift let us part, from pole to pole asunder.
A cause like ours is its own sacrament;
Truth, Justice, Reason, Love, and Liberty,
Th' eternal links that clasp the world are in it,
And he who breaks their sanction, breaks all law,
And infinite connection.

Arr. True, my Lord.

And. And such the force I feel.

Arr. And I.

Arr. And all.

Gust. Know then, that ere our royal *Stenon* fall,
While this my valiant cousin and myself,

Sc. 3.

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Sc. 3. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 19

By chains and treach'ry, lay detain'd in *Denmark*,
 Upon a dark and unsuspected hour
 The bloody *Grisliern* fought to take my head.
 Thanks to the ruling pow'r ! within whose eye
 Imbosom'd ill and mighty treasons roll,
 Prevented of their blackness — I escap'd,
 Led by a gen'rous arm, and some time lay
 Conceal'd in *Denmark*. For my forfeit head
 Became the price of crowns, each port and path
 Was shut against my passage, till I heard
 That *Stenon*, valiant *Stenon* fell in battle,
 And freedom was no more. O then what bounds
 Had pow'r to hem the desp'rate ? I o'erpass'd them,
 Travers'd all *Sweden*, thro' ten thousand foes,
 Impending perils, and *surrounding tongues*,
 That from himself inquir'd *Gustavus* out.
 Witness, my country, how I toil'd to wake
 Thy sons to liberty ! in vain — for fear,
 Cold fear had seiz'd on all — Here last I came,
 And shut me from the sun, whose hateful beams
 Serv'd but to show the ruins of my country.
 When here, my friends, 'twas here at length I found
 What I had left to look for, gallant spirits,
 In the rough form of untought peasantry.

And. Indeed they once were brave, our *Dal-*
carlians

Have oft been known to give a law to kings ;
 And as their only wealth has been their liberty,
 From all th' unmeasur'd graspings of ambition
 Have held that gem untouch'd — tho' now 'tis fear'd —

Gust. It is not fear'd — I say they still shall
 hold it.

I've search'd these men, and find them like the soil,
 Barren without, and to the eye unlovely,
 But they've their minds within ; and this the day
 In which I mean to prove them.

Arn. O *Gustavus* !

Most aptly hast thou caught the passing hour,
 Upon whose critical and fated hinge
 The state of *Sweden* turns.

Gust. And to this hour

I've

I've therefore held me in this darksome womb,
That sends me forth as to a second birth
Of freedom, or thro' death to reach eternity.
This day return'd with ev'ry circling year,
In thousands pours the mountain-peasants forth,
Each with his batter'd arms and rusty helm,
In sportive discipline well train'd, and prompt
Against the day of peril — thus disguis'd,
Already have I stirr'd their latent sparks
Of slumb'ring virtue, apt as I cou'd wish
To warm before the lightest breath of liberty.

Arn. How will they kindle, when confess'd to view
Once more their lov'd *Gustavus* stands before them,
And pours his blaze of virtues on their souls !

Arv. It cannot fail.

And. It has a glorious aspect.

Arv. Now *Sweden* ! rise and reassert thy rights,
Or be for ever fall'n.

And. Then be it so.

Arn. Lead on, thou arm of war,
To death or victory.

Gust. Let us embrace.

Why thus, my friends, thus join'd in such a cause,
Are we not equal to a host of slaves !
You say the foe's at hand — why, let them come,
Steep are our hills, nor easy of access,
And few the hours we ask for their reception.
For I will take these rustic sons of liberty
In the first warmth and hurry of their souls ;
And shou'd the tyrant then attempt our heights,
He comes upon his fate — Arise thou sun !
Haste, haste to rouse thee to the call of liberty,
That shall once more salute the morning-beam,
And hail thee to thy setting.

Arn. O blest voice !

Prolong that note but one short day thro' *Sweden*,
And tho' the sun and life should set together,
It matters not — we shall have liv'd that day.

Arv. Were it not worth the hazard of a life
To know if *Cristiern* leads his pow'rs in person,
And what his scope intends ? Be mine that task.

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Sc. 3. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 21

Ev'n to the tyrant's tent I'll win my way,
And mingle with his councils.

Gust. Go, my friend.

Dear as thou art, whene'er our country calls,
Friends, sons, and fires should yield their treasure up,
Nor own a sense beyond the public safety.

But tell me, my *Avida*, ere thou goest,
Tell me what hand has made thy friend its debtor,
And giv'n thee up to freedom and *Gustavus*?

Arv. Ha ! let me think of that, 'tis sure she loves him.

[*Aside.*

Away thou skance and jaundice eye of jealousy,
That tempts my soul to sicken at perfection;
Away ! I will unfold it ——— to thyself

Avida owes his freedom.

Gust. How, my friend,

Arv. Some months are pass'd since in the *Danish*
dungeon

With care emaciate, and unwholesome damps
Sick'ning I lay, chain'd to my flinty bed,
And call'd on death to ease me ——— strait a light
Shone round, as when the ministry of heav'n
Descends to kneeling saints. But O ! the form
That pour'd upon my sight ——— ye angels speak !
For ye alone are like her ; or present
Such visions pictur'd to the nightly eye
Of fancy tranc'd in bliss. She then approach'd,
The softest pattern of embodied meekness,
For pity had divinely touch'd her eye,
And harmoniz'd her motions ——— Ah, she cry'd,
Unhappy stranger, art not thou the man
Whose virtues have endear'd thee to *Gustavus* ?

Gust. *Gustavus* did she say ?

Arv. Yes, yes, her lips

Breath'd forth that name with a peculiar sweetness.
Loos'd from my bonds, I rose, at her command,
When, scarce recov'ring speech, I would have kneel'd,
But haste thee, haste thee for thy life, she cry'd ;
And O, if e'er thy envied eyes behold
Thy lov'd *Gustavus* ; say, a gentle foe
Has giv'n thee to his friendship.

Gust.

22 GUSTAVUS VASA, ACT 2.

Gust. You've much amaz'd me ! is her name a secret ?

Arv. To me it is — but you perhaps may guess.

Gust. No, on my word.

Arv. You too had your deliv'rer.

Gust. A kind, but not a fair one — Well, my friends !
Our cause is ripe, and calls us forth to action.
Tread ye not lighter ? Swells not ev'ry breast
With ampler scope to take your country in,
And breathe the cause of virtue ? Rise, ye *Swedes* !
Rise greatly equal to this hour's importance.
On us the eyes of future ages wait,
And this day's arm strikes forth decisive fate ;
This day, that shall for ever sink — or save ;
And make each *Swede* a monarch — or a slave.

ACT II.

SCENE, the Camp.

Enter Christiern, Attendants, &c. Trollio meets him.

Troll. ALL hail most mighty of the thrones of
Europe !
The morn salutes thee with auspicious brightness,
No vapour frowns prophetic on her brow,
But the clear sun who travels with thy arms
Still smiles, attendant on thy growing greatness :
His evening-eye shall see the peaceful lord
Of all the north, of utmost *Scandinavia* ;
Whence thou mayst pour thy conquests o'er the
earth,

Till farthest *India* glows beneath thy empire,
And *Lybia* knows no regal name but yours.

Crift. Yes, *Trollio*, I confess the godlike thirst,
Ambition, that wou'd drink a sea of glory.
But what from *Dalecarlia* ?

Troll. Late last night,
I sent a trusty slave to *Peterfon*,
And hourly wait some tidings.

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Crift. Think you ? — fure
The wretches will not dare fuch quick perdition.

Troll. I think they will not — tho' of old I know
them

All born to broils, the very fons of tumult ;
Waste is their wealth, and mutiny their birthright,
And this the yearly fever of their blood,
Their holiday of war ; a day apart,
Torn out from peace, and facred to rebellion.
Oft has their battle hung upon the brow
Of yon wild fteep, a living cloud of milchiefs,
Pregnant with plagues, and empty'd on the heads
Of many a monarch.

Crift. Monarchs they were not,
Pageants of wax, the mouldings of the populace,
Tame paltry idols, fcepter'd upfor fhow,
And garnish'd into royalty — No, *Trollio*,
Kings fhould be felt if they wou'd find obedience ;
The beaft has fenfe enough to know his rider,
When the knee trembles, and the hand grows flack,
He cafts for liberty : but bends and turns
For him that leaps with boldnefs on his back,
And fpers him to the bit.

S C E N E II.

*Enter a gentleman-usher, and feveral peasants, who
kneel and bow at a diftance.*

Crift. What flaves are thofe ?

Gent. My gracious Liege, your fubjects.

Crift. Whence ?

Gent. Of Sweden.

From *Angermannia*, from *Helsingia* fome,
Some from *Gemtian*, and *Nerician* provinces.

Crift. Their bufinefs ?

Gent. They come to fpeak their griefs.

Crift. Their griefs ! their infolence !

Is not the camel mute beneath his burden ?

Were they not born to bear ? Away ! — hold ! come,
What

What wou'd these murmurers ?

Gent. Most royal *Cristiern*,

They say they have but one — one gracious king,
And yet are bow'd beneath a host of tyrants,
Taskmasters, soldiers, gatherers of subsidies,
All officers of rapine, rape, and murder ;
Will-doing potentates, the lords of licence,
Who weigh their sweat and blood, and heavier shame,
Ev'n as a feather puff'd away in sport,
The pastime of a gale.

Crist. I'll hear no more.

I know ye, well I know ye, ye base supplicants,
Fear is the only worship of your souls ;
And ever where ye hate, ye yield obeisance.
Wretches ! Shall I go poring on the earth,
Lest my imperial foot should tread on emmets ?
Is it for you I must control my soldier,
And coop my eagles from their carrion ? No —
Are ye not commoners, vile things in nature,
Poor priceless peasants ? Slaves can know no property :
Out of my sight !

[*Exeunt Peasants.*]

S C E N E III.

Enter Arvida guarded, and a gentleman.

Arv. Now fate I'm caught, and what remains is obvious.

Gent. A prisoner, good my Lord.

Crist. When taken ?

Gent. Now, ev'n here, before your tent ;
I mark'd his careless action, but his eye
Of studied observation — then his port
And base attire ill suiting — I inquir'd,
But found he was a stranger.

Crist. Ha ! observe.

(Damn'd affectation) what a sullen scorn
Knits up his brow, and frowns upon our presence.
What — ay — thou wou'dst be thought a mystery,
Some greatness in eclipse — Whence art thou, slave ?

Silent

Sc. 4.

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SC. 4. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 25

Silent ! nay, then—bring forth the torture there—
A smile ! damnation ! — How the wretch assumes
The wreck of state, the suff'ring soul of majesty !
What, have we no pre-eminence, no claim ?
Dost thou not know thy life is in our power ?

Arv. 'Tis therefore I despise it.

Crist. Matchless insolence !

What art thou ? speak !

Arv. Be sure no friend to thee ;
For I'm a foe to tyrants.

Crist. Fiends and fire ! ——

A whirlwind tear thee, most audacious traitor.

Arv. Do, rage and chafe, thy wrath's beneath me,
Cristiern.

How poor thy pow'r, how empty is thy happiness !
When such a wretch as I appear to be,
Can ride thy temper, harrow up thy form,
And stretch thy soul upon the rack of passion.

Crist. I'll know thee —— I will know thee ! bear
him hence !

Why, what are kings, if slaves can brave us thus ?
Go, *Trollio*, hold him to the rack —— tear, search him,
Prove him thro' ev'ry poignance, sting him deep.
[*Exit Trollio with Arvida guarded.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter a Messenger as in haste.

Crist. What wou'dst thou, fellow ?

Mess. O my Sovereign Lord,
I am come fast and far, from ev'n till morn ;
Five times I've cross'd the shade of sleepless night,
Impatient of thy presence.

Crist. Whence ?

Mess. From *Denmark*,
Commended from the consort of thy throne
To speed and privacy.

Crist. Your words wou'd taste of terror — wretch,
Speak out,

C

Nor

Nor dare to tremble here — For didst thou bear
Thy tidings from a thousand leagues around,
Unmov'd, I move the whole, the cent'ring nave,
Where turns that mighty circle — Speak thy message.

Mess. A secret malady, my gracious Liege,
Some factious vapour, risen from off the skirts
Of southmost *Norway*, has diffus'd its bane,
And rages now within the heart of *Denmark*.

Crist. It must not, cannot, 'tis impossible !
What, my own *Danes* ? Nay, then the world wants
weeding.

I will not bear it — Hell ! I'd rather see
This earth a desert, desolate and wild,
And like the lion stalk my lonely round,
Famish'd, and roaring for my prey — Call *Trollio*,
I'll have men studied, deeply read in mischiefs.

SCENE V.

Enter a servant, who kneels, and delivers a letter.

Crist. From whom ?

Serv. From *Peter*son.

Crist. To *Trollio* — Right.

[*Read*]

How's this ? — be gone —

Go all — without there — wait my pleasure.

© curse ! how hell has tim'd its plagues !

SCENE VI.

Enter Trollio.

Crist. Come near, my *Trollio*.

We've heard ill news from *Denmark* — that's
trifle —

But here's to blast thy eyes — read —

Troll. Ha ! *Gustavus* !

So near us, and in arms !

Crist. What's to be done ? now, *Trollio*, now's the

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To subtilize thy soul, sound every depth,
 And waken all the wondrous statesman in thee:
 For I must tell thee, (spite of pride and royalty,
 Of guarding armies, and of circling nations
 That bend beneath my nod), this curs'd *Gustavus*
 Invades my shrinking spirits, awes my heart,
 And sits upon my slumbers — All in vain
 Has he been daring, and have I been vigilant;
 Spite of himself he still evades the hunter,
 And if there's pow'r in heav'n or hell, it guards him.
 When was I vanquish'd, but when he oppos'd me?
 When have I conquer'd, but when he was absent?
 His name's a host, a terror to my legions.
 And by my tripled crown I swear, *Gustavus*,
 I'd rather meet all *Europe* for my foe,
 Than see thy face in arms!

Troll. Be calm, my Liege;
 And listen to a secret big with consequence,
 That gives thee back the second man on earth,
 Whose valour cou'd plant fears around thy throne:
 Thy pris'ner —

Crist. What of him?

Troll. The Prince *Arvida*.

Crist. How!

Troll. The same.

Crist. My royal fugitive!

Troll. Most certain.

Crist. Now then 'tis plain who sent him hither.

Troll. Yes.

Pray give me leave, my Lord — a thought comes
 cros me —

If so, he must be ours —

[*Pauses.*]

Your pardon for a question — Has *Arvida*
 E'er seen your beauteous daughter, your *Cristina*?

Crist. Never — yes — possibly he might, that day
 When the proud pair, *Gustavus* and *Arvida*,
 Thro' *Copenhagen* drew a length of chain,
 And grac'd my chariot-wheels — but why the question?

Troll. I'll tell you — while e'en now he stood
 before us,
 mark'd his high demeanour, and my eye

Claim'd some remembrance of him, tho' in clouds
 Doubtful and distant, but a nearer view
 Renew'd the characters effac'd by absence.
 Yet, lest he might presume upon a friendship
 Of ancient league between us. I disssembled,
 Nor seem'd to know him — On he proudly strode,
 As who should say, Back fortune, know thy distance !
 Thus steadily he pass'd, and mock'd his fate.
 When, lo ! the Princess to her morning-walk
 Came forth attended — quick amazement seiz'd
Arvida at the sight ; his steps took root,
 A tremor shook him ; and his alt'ring cheek
 Now sudden flush'd, then fled its wonted colour ;
 While with an eager and intemp'rate look
 He bent his form, and hung upon her beauties.

Crift. Ha ! did our daughter note him ?

Troll. No, my Lord ;

She pass'd regardless — strait his pride fell from him,
 And at her name he started ;
 Then heav'd a sigh, and cast a look to heav'n,
 Of such a mute, yet eloquent emotion,
 As seem'd to say, Now fate thou hast prevail'd,
 And found one way to triumph o'er *Arvida* !

Crift. But whither wou'd this lead ?

Troll. Lift, lift, my Lord !

While thus his soul's unseated, shook by passion,
 Cou'd we engage him to betray *Gustavus* —

Crift. O empty hope ! Impossible, my *Trollio*.
 Do I not know him, and the curs'd *Gustavus* ?
 Both fix'd in resolution deep as hell,
 And proud as high *Olympus* !

Troll. Ah, my Liege,
 No mortal footing treads so firm in virtue,
 As always to abide the slipp'ry path,
 Nor deviate with the bias — Some have few,
 But each man has his failing, some defect
 Wherein to slide temptation — Leave him to me.

Crift. I know thou hast a serpentizing genius,
 Canst wind the subtlest mazes of the soul,
 And trace her wand'rings to the source of action.
 If thou canst bend this proud one to our purpose,

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Sc. 7.

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Sc. 7. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 29

And make the lion crouch, 'tis well — if not,
Away at once, and sweep him from remembrance.

Troll. Then I must promise deep.

Crift. Ay, any thing ; outbid ambition.

Troll. Love ?

Crift. Ha ! yes — — our daughter too — if she
can bribe him :

But then to win him to betray his friend ?

Troll. O doubt it not, my Lord — for if he loves,
As sure he greatly does, I have a stratagem
That holds the certainty of fate within it.

Love is a passion whose effects are various ;
It ever brings some change upon the soul,
Some virtue, or some vice, till then unknown,
Degrades the hero, and makes cowards valiant.

Crift. True, when it pours upon a youthful temper,
Open and apt to take the torrent in ;
It owns no limits, no restraint it knows,
But sweeps all down tho' heav'n and hell oppose ;
Ev'n virtue rears in vain her sacred mound,
Raz'd in its rage, or in its swellings drown'd.

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E VII.

Opens and discovers Arvide in chains, guards preparing instruments of death and torture. He advances in confusion.

Arv. Off, off, vain cumbrance, ye conflicting thoughts !
Leave me to heav'n. O peace ! — It will not be —
Just when I rose above mortality,
To pour her wondrous weight of charms upon me !
At such a time, it was, it was too much !
To pluck the soaring pinion of my soul,
While eagle-ey'd she held her flight to heav'n,
O'er pain and death triumphant ! Help, ye saints,
Angelic ministers, descend, descend !
And lift me to myself ; hold, bind my heart
Firm and unshaken in th' approaching ruin,
The wreck of earth-born frailty ! and O heaven !

For every pang these tortur'd limbs shall feel,
 Defend in tenfold blessings on *Gustavus* !
 Yes, bless him, bless him ! crown his hours with joy,
 His head with glory, and his arms with conquest ;
 Set his firm foot upon the neck of tyrants,
 And be his name the balm of every lip
 That breathes thro' *Sweden* ! worthiest to be styl'd
 Their friend, their chief, their father, and their king !

S C E N E VIII.

Enter Trollio.

Troll. Unbind your prisoner.

Arv. How ?

Troll. You have your liberty,
 And may depart unquestion'd.

Arv. Do not mock me.

It is not to be thought, while pow'r remains,
 That *Cristiern* wants a reason to be cruel.
 But let him know I wou'd not be oblig'd.
 He who accepts the favours of a tyrant,
 Shares in his guilt ; they leave a stain behind them.

Troll. You wrong the native temper of his soul ;
 Cruel of force, but never of election :
 Prudence compell'd him to a show of tyranny ;
 Howe'er, those politics are now no more,
 And mercy in her turn shall shine on *Sweden*.

Arv. Indeed ! it were a strange, a bless'd reverse,
 Devoutly to be wish'd ; but then the cause,
 The cause, my Lord, must surely be uncommon.
 May I presume ?
 Perhaps a secret.

Troll. No — or if it were,
 The boldness of thy spirit claims respect,
 And thou'd be answer'd. Know, the only man,
 In whom our monarch ever knew repulse,
 Is now our friend ; that terror of the field,
 Th' invincible *Gustavus*.

Arv. Ha ! friend to *Cristiern* ! guard thyself, my
 heart!

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Sc. 8. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 31

Nor seem to take alarm — why, good my Lord,
What terror is there in a wretch proſcrib'd,
Naked of means, and diſtant as *Gustavus* !

Troll. There you miſtake — Nor knew we till this
hour

The danger was ſo near — from yonder hill
He ſends propoſals, back'd with all the pow'rs
Of *Dalecarlia*, thoſe licentious reſolutes,
Who, having nought to hazard in the wreck,
Are ever foremoſt to foment a ſtorm.

Arv. I were too bold to queſtion on the terms.

Troll. No — truſt me, valiant man, whoe'er thou art,
I wou'd do much to win a worth like thine,
By any act of ſervice, or of confidence.
The terms *Gustavus* claims, indeed, are haughty ;
The freedom of his mother and his ſiſter,
His forfeit province, *Gothland*, and the iſles
Submitted to his ſceptre — But the league,
The bond of amity, and laſting friendſhip,
Is, that he claims *Criſtina* for his bride.
You ſtart, and ſeem ſurpris'd.

Arv. A ſudden pain
Juſt ſtruck athwart my breaſt — But ſay, my Lord,
I thought you nam'd *Criſtina*.

Troll. Yes.

Arv. O torture !

[*Aside.*

What of her, my good Lord ?

Troll. I ſaid, *Gustavus* claim'd her for his bride.

Arv. His bride ! his wife !

You did not mean his wife ! Do fiends feel this ?

[*Aside.*

Down, heart, nor tell thy anguiſh ! Pray excuſe me,

Did you not ſay, the Princeſs was his wife ?

Whoſe wife, my Lord ?

Troll. I did not ſay what was, but what muſt be.

Arv. Touching *Gustavus*, was it not ?

Troll. The ſame.

Arv. His bride !

Troll. I ſay his bride, his wife ; his lov'd *Criſtina* !
Criſtina, fancied in the very prime

And

32 G U S T A V U S V A S A, Act 2.

And youthful smile of nature ; form'd for joys
Unknown to mortals. You seem indispos'd.

Arv. The crime of constitution—Oh *Gustavus* !
[*Aside.*

This is too much !— And think you then, my Lord —
What, will the royal *Cristiern* e'er consent
To match his daughter with his deadliest foe ?

Troll. What shou'd he do ? War else must be eternal.
Besides, some rumours from his *Danish* realms
Make peace essential here.

Arv. Yes, peace has sweets
That *Hybla* never knew ; it sleeps on down,
Cull'd gently from beneath the cherub's wings ;
No bed for mortals — Man is warfare — all
A hurricane within ; yet friendship stoops,
And gilds the gloom with falsehood — smiles and var-
nish !

For still the storm grows high, and then no shore !
No rock to split on ! 'Twere a kind perdition
To sink ten thousand fathom at a plunge,
And fasten on oblivion — there we hold,
And all is —

Troll. Help, bear him up. O potency of love !
That plucks this noble fabric from his base.
Bend, bend him forward — He revives — How fare
you ?

Arv. I know not — yet a dagger were more friendly.
Return me, *Trollio*, O return me back
To death, to racks ! Undone, undone, *Arvida* !

Troll. Is't possible, my Lord ! the Prince *Arvida* !
My friend !

Arv. Confusion to the name !

Troll. Why this, good heav'n ? And wherefore thus
disguis'd ?

Arv. Yes, that accomplish'd traitor, that *Gustavus* !
While he sat planning private scenes of happiness,
O well dissembled ! he, he sent me hither ;
My friendly, unsuspecting heart a sacrifice,
To make death sure, and rid him of a rival.

Troll. A rival ! Do you then love *Cristiern's* daughter

Arv. Name her not, *Trollio* ; since she can't be mine

Gustavus

Sc. 9.

Gustavus

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SC. 9. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 33

Gustavus ! how, ah ! how hast thou deceiv'd me !
 Who could have look'd for falsehood from thy brow ?
 Whose heav'nly arch was as the throne of Virtue,
 Thy eye appear'd a sun to cheer the world
 Thy bosom Truth's fair palace, and thy arms,
 Benevolent, the harbour for mankind.

Troll. What's to be done ? Believe me, valiant Prince,
 I know not which most sways me to thy int'rests,
 My love to thee, or hatred to *Gustavus*.

Arv. Wou'd you then save me ? Think, contrive it
 quickly !

Lend me your troops — by all the pow'rs of vengeance,
 Myself will face this terror of the north,
 This son of fame — this — O *Gustavus* — what ?
 Where had I wander'd ? — Stab my bleeding country !
 Save, shield me from that thought.

Troll. Retirè, my Lord ;
 For see, the Princess comes.

Arv. Where, *Trollio*, where ?
 Ha ! Yes, she comes indeed ! her beauties drive
 Time, place, and truth, and circumstance before them !
 Perdition pleases there — pull — tear me from her !
 Yet must I gaze — but one — but one look more,
 And I were lost for ever. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E IX.

Enter Cristina, Mariana, and attendants.

Cristina. Forbid it shame ! Forbid it virgin modesty !
 No, no, my friend, *Gustavus* ne'er shall know it.
 O I am overpaid with conscious pleasure ;
 The sense but to have sav'd that wondrous man,
 Is still a smiling cherub in my breast,
 And whispers peace within.

Mar. 'Tis strange a man, of his high note and
 consequence,
 Thou'd so evade the busy search of thousands ;
 That six long months have shut him from inquiry,
 And not an eye can trace him to his covert.

Cristina.

34 G U S T A V U S V A S A, Act 2.

Cristina. Once 'twas not so, each infant lisp'd, *Gustavus!*
It was the fav'rite name of ev'ry language,
His slightest motions fill'd the world with tidings ;
Wak'd he or slept, Fame watch'd th' important hour,
And nations told it round.

Mar. I've heard, my Princess,
What time *Gustavus* lay detain'd in *Denmark*,
Your royal father fought the hero's friendship,
And offer'd ample terms of peace and amity.

Cristina. He did ; he offer'd that, my *Mariana*,
For which contending monarchs su'd in vain,
He offer'd me, his darling, his *Cristina* ;
But I was slighted, slighted by a captive,
Tho' kingdoms swell'd my dower.

Mar. Amazement fix me,
Rejected by *Gustavus* !

Cristina. Yes, *Mariana* ; — but rejected nobly.
Not worlds cou'd win him to betray his country !
Had he consented, I had then despis'd him.
What's all the gaudy glitter of a crown ?
What, but the glaring meteor of ambition,
That leads a wretch benighted in his errors,
Points to the gulf, and shines upon destruction.

Mar. You wrong your charms, whose pow'r might
reconcile

Things opposite in nature — Had he seen you ! —

Cristina. He has, my *Mariana*, he has seen me.
I'll tell thee — yet while inexpert of years,
I heard of bloody spoils, the waste of war,
And dire conflicting man ; *Gustavus'* name
Superior rose, still dreadful in the tale :
Then first he seiz'd my infancy of soul,
As somewhat fabl'd of gigantic fierceness,
Too huge for any form ; he scar'd my sleep,
And fill'd my young idea. Not the boast
Of all his virtues, graces only known
To him, and heav'nly natures ! cou'd erase
The strong impression, till that wondrous day
In which he met my eyes. But O, O heav'n !
O love, and all ye cordial pow'rs of passion !
What then was my amazement ! he was chain'd,

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Was chain'd, my *Mariana* ! like the robes
Of coronation, worn by youthful kings,
He drew his shackles. The *Herculean* nerve
Brac'd his young arm ; and soften'd in his cheek
Liv'd more than woman's sweetness ! Then his eye !
His mien ! his native dignity ! he look'd,
As tho' he led captivity in chains,
And all were slaves around.

Mar. Did he observe you ?

Grift. He did : for as I trembl'd, look'd, and sigh'd,
His eyes met mine ; he fix'd their glories on me.
Confusion thrill'd me then, and secret joy,
Fast throbbing, stole its treasures from my heart,
And mantling upward, turn'd my face to crimson.
I wish'd - - but did not dare to look — he gaz'd ;
When sudden, as by force, he turn'd away,
And would no more behold me.

S C E N E X.

Enter Laertes.

Laer. Ah, bright imperial maid ! my royal mistress !

Cristina. What wou'dst thou say ? Thy looks speak
terror to me.

Laer. O you are ruin'd, sacrific'd, undone !

I heard it all ; your cruel, cruel father
Has sold you, giv'n you up a spoil to treason,
The purchase of the noblest blood on earth —

Gustavus !

Cristina. Eh ! what of him ? Where, where is he ?

Laer. In *Dalecarlia*, on some great design,
Doom'd in an hour to fall by faithless hands :
His friend, the brave, the false, deceiv'd *Arvida*,
Ev'n now prepares to lead a band of ruffians
Beneath the winding covert of the hill,
And seize *Gustavus*, obvious to the snares
Of friendship's fair dissemblance. And your father
Has vow'd your beauties to *Arvida*'s arms,
The purchase of his falsehood.

Cristina.

Cristina. Shield me heav'n !
First duty, break thy filial bands in sunder,
And blot the name of parent from the world !
Is there no let, no means of quick prevention ?

Laer. Behold my life still chain'd to thy direction,
My will shall have a wing for ev'ry word
That breathes thy mandate.

Cristina. Will you, good *Laertes* ?
Alas, I fear to overtask thy friendship.
Say, will you save me then — O go, haste, fly !
Acquaint *Gustavus* — if, if he must fall,
Let hosts that hem this single lion in,
Let nations hunt him down — let him fall nobly.

Laer. I go, my Princess — Heav'n direct me to him!
[Exit.

Cristina. I wou'd pray too, to save me from
pollution ;
Detested stain, the touch of the betrayer !
But mighty love the partial pray'r arrests,
And leaves me only anxious for *Gustavus*.
For him cold fears my fainting bosom chill,
His cares distract me, and his dangers kill ;
Ye pow'rs ! if deaf to all the vows I make,
Yet shield *Gustavus*, for *Gustavus*' sake ;
Protect his virtues from a faithless foe,
And save your only image left below.

A C T III.

S C E N E, *Mountains of Dalecarlia.*

Enter Gustavus as a peasant — Dalecarlians following

Gust. YE men of *Sweden*, wherefore are ye come ?
See ye not yonder, how the locusts swarm,
To drink the fountains of your honour up,
And leave your hills a desert — Wretched men !
Why came ye forth ? is this a time for sport ?
Or are ye met with song and jovial feast,
To welcome your new guests, your *Danish* visitants ?

Sc. 2.

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To stretch your supple necks beneath their feet,
 And fawning lick the dust? — Go, go, my countrymen,
 Each to your several mansions, trim them out,
 Cull all the tedious earnings of your toil
 To purchase bondage — Bid your blooming daughters,
 And your chaste wives to spread their beds with softness;
 Then go ye forth, and with your proper hands
 Conduct your masters in; — conduct the sons
 Of lust and violation — O *Swedes, Swedes!*
 Heav'n's! are ye men, and will ye suffer this?

S C E N E II.

Enter Arnoldus, who talks apart with Gustavus.

1st *Dale*. How my blood boils!

2d *Dale*. Who is this honest spokesman?

3d *Dale*. What, know you not *Rodolphus* of the mines?
 A better lab'rer ne'er struck steel to stone.

Gust. There was a time, my friends! a glorious time;
 When, had a single man of your forefathers
 Upon the frontier met a host in arms,
 His courage scarce had turn'd; himself had stood,
 Alone had stood the bulwark of his country.
 Your sires were known but by their manly fronts,
 On their black brows, enthron'd. sat liberty,
 The awe of honour, and contempt of death.

1st *Dale*. We are not bastards.

2d *Dale*. No.

3d *Dale*. We're *Dalecarlians*.

Gust. Come, come ye on then. Here I take my stand!
 Here on the brink, the very verge of liberty;
 Altho' contention rise upon the clouds,
 Fix heav'n with earth, and roll the ruin onward;
 Here will I fix, and breast me to the shock,
 Till I, or *Denmark* fall.

Siv. And who art thou,
 That thus wou'dst swallow all the glory up
 That shou'd redeem the times? Behold this breast,
 The sword has till'd it; and the stripes of slaves

D

Shall

Shall ne'er trace honour here; shall never blot
The fair inscription — Never shall the cords
Of *Danish* insolence bind down these arms
That bore my royal master from the field.

Gust. Ha ! Say you, brother ? Were you there —
O grief !

Where liberty and *Stenon* fell together ?

Siv. Yes, I was there — A bloody field it was,
Where conquest gasp'd, and wanted breath to tell
Its o'ertoil'd triumph. There our bleeding king,
There *Stenon* on this bosom made his bed,
And rolling back his dying eyes upon me ;
Soldier, he cried, if e'er it be thy lot
To see my valiant cousin, great *Gustavus*,
Tell him — for once, that I have fought like him,
And wou'd like him have —
Conquer'd — he shou'd have said — but there, O there,
Death sto — pt him short.

Gust. Come to my arms, and let me hide thy tears,
For I have caught their softness — O *Danes, Danes !*
You shall weep blood for this. Shall they not, brother ?
Yes, we will deal our might with thrifty vengeance,
A life for ev'ry blow, and when we fall,
There shall be weight in't ; like the tott'ring tow'rs
That draw contiguous ruin.

Siv. Brave, brave man !

My soul admires thee — By my father's spirit,
I wou'd not barter such a death as this
For immortality ! Nor we alone —
Here be the trusty gleanings of that field
Where last we fought for freedom ; here's rich poverty
Tho' wrapp'd in rags, my fifty brave companions ;
Who thro' the force of fifteen thousand foes
Bore off their king, and sav'd his great remains.

Gust. Give me your hands, those valiant hands —
Why, Captain,

We could but die alone, with these we'll conquer.
My fellow-lab'ers too — What say ye, friends ?
Shall we not strike for't ?

All. Death ; victory or death !
No bonds, no bonds !

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Arn. Spoke like yourselves — Ye men of *Dalecarlia*,
 Brave men and bold ! whom ev'ry future age,
 Tongues, nations, languages, and rolls of fame
 Shall mark for wondrous deeds, atchievements won
 From honour's dang'rous summit, warriors all !
 Say, might ye chuse a chief, for high exploits,
 From the first annal, to the latest praise
 That breathes a hero's name — Speak, name the man
 Who then should meet your wish ?

Siv. Forbear the theme.
 Why wou'dst thou seek to sink us with the weight
 Of grievous recollection ? O *Gustavus* !
 Cou'd the dead wake, thou wert that man of men,
 First of the foremost.

Gust. Didst thou know *Gustavus* ?

Siv. Know him ! O heaven ! what else, who else was
 worth

The knowledge of a foldier ? That great day,
 When *Cristiern*, in his third attempt on *Sweden*,
 Had summ'd his pow'rs, and weigh'd the scale of fight :
 On the bold brink, the very push of conquest,
Gustavus rush'd, and bore the battle down ;
 In his full sway of prowess, like *Leviathan*
 That scoops his foaming progress on the main,
 And drives the shoals along — forward I sprung,
 All emulous, and lab'ring to attend him ;
 Fear fled before, behind him rout grew loud,
 And distant wonder gaz'd — At length he turn'd,
 And having ey'd me with a wondrous look
 Of sweetness mix'd with glory — grace inestimable !
 He pluck'd this bracelet from his conq'ring arm,
 And bound it here — My wrist seem'd treble nerv'd ;
 My heart spoke to him, and I did such deeds
 As best might thank him — But from that blest day
 I never saw him more — yet still to this
 I bow, as to the relics of my saint :
 Each morn I drop a tear on ev'ry bead,
 Count all the glories of *Gustavus* o'er,
 And think I still behold him.

Gust. Rightly thought ;
 For so thou dost, my soldier,

Give me my arms — Off, off ye dark disguises !
 For I will be myself. Behold your general,
Gustavus ! come once more to lead you on
 To laurel'd victory, to fame, to freedom !

1st *Dale*. Is it ?

2d *Dale*. Yes.

3d *Dale*. No.

4th *Dale*. 'Tis he !

5th *Dale*. 'Tis he !

6th *Dale*. 'Tis he !

[A shout.

Siv. Strike me, ye pow'rs ! — It is illusion all !

It cannot.

Gust. What, no nearer ?

Siv. 'Tis, it is ! — [Falls and embraces his knees.

Gust. O speechless eloquence !

Rise to my arms, my friend.

Siv. Friend ! said you friend ?

O my heart's Lord ! my conquerer ! my ! —

Gust. Approach, my fellow-foldiers, your *Gustavus*

Claims no precedence here : friendship like mine

Throws all respects behind it — 'tis enough —

I read your joys, your transports in your eyes ;

And wou'd, O, wou'd I had a life to spend,

For ev'ry soldier here ! whose ev'ry life's

Far dearer than my own ; dearer than aught,

Except your liberty, except your honour.

Perish *Gustavus*, ere this sacred sun,

That lights the rest of *Sweden* to their shame,

Should blush upon your chains ! why said I chains !

To souls like yours, I should have talk'd of triumphs,

Empire, and fame, and hazards imminent,

Occasions wish'd, for glory — haste, brave men !

Collect your friends to join us on the instant ;

Summon our brethren to their share of conquest,

And let loud Echo, from her circling hills,

Sound freedom, till the undulation shake

The bounds of utmost *Sweden*.

[*Exeunt Dalecarlians, crying, Gustavus,
 Gustavus, Liberty.*

SCENE

S C E N E III.

Enter Anderson.

And. There was a glorious found !

Gust. Yes, *Anderson*,

The long-wish'd hour is come — the storm is up,
And wrecks will follow — Where they are to light,
Let heav'n determine — Well, my noble friend,
Has *Peterfon* fet out ?

And. He has, this instant ;

And bears your packet to the tyrant's camp.

Gust. What think you of his zeal ?

And. In truth, my Lord,

It wears a gallant show.

Gust. 'Tis specious all,

Flash without fire, the lightning of a cloud
That carries darkness in the rear — for *Peterfon*,
To spread my letters thro' the camp of *Cristiern*,
And seek for succours in the jaws of death,
It shew'd too bold, too much the flaming patriot.
Beside, I know him for the friend of *Trollio*.

And. Why wou'd you then employ him ?

Gust. There's the mystery.

'Tis not his faith, but treachery I trust to.
My letters are directed to the chiefs
Of those inglorious mercenary *Swedes*,
Whom *Cristiern* has seduc'd to join his host,
And turn the sword of conquest on their country ;
To each of those I have address'd in terms
Of special correspondence, meant to rouse
The jealousy of *Cristiern*, as I think
My packet can't escape him — What ensues ?
The tyrant hence concludes himself betray'd,
Sifts all his legions, thins the ranks of fight,
And leaves them open to our bold invasion.
But grant that *Peterfon* deceive my aim,
And hold the rank of virtue ; then the *Swedes*
May waken to the glorious call of honour.

So — ev'ry way it saves us from the guilt
Of *Swedes* encount'ring *Swedes*, and spares the blood
Of brethren, tho' revolted.

And. On my soul,
This is a stratagem that saps the miner,
Makes treason turn a traitor to itself;
And mock its own designs.

Gust. O noble friend, fast winds the great machine
That strikes the fate of *Sweden* — Go, my *Anderson*,
Assemble all thy brave adherents round thee,
With warlike inspiration warm their souls,
And haste to join me here.

And. I will, my Lord.

[Exit

SCENE IV.

Enter Laertes.

Laer. Thy presence nobly speaks the man I wish,
Gustavus.

Gust. Yes. Thou hast a hostile garb,
Ha! say — Art thou *Laertes*? If I err not,
There is a friendly semblance in that face,
Which answers to a fond impression here,
And tells me I'm thy debtor — my deliv'rer!

Laer. No, valiant Prince, you over-rate my service,
There is a worthier object of your gratitude
Whom yet you know not — O, I have to tell —
But then to gain your credit, must unfold
What haply should be secret — Be it so;
You are all honour.

Gust. Let me to thy mind,
For thou hast wak'd my soul into a thought
That holds me all attention.

Laer. Mightiest man!
To me alone you held yourself oblig'd
For life and liberty — Had it been so,
I were most blest'd, with retribution just
To pay thee for my own — For on the day
When by your arm the mighty *Thracians* fell,

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Sc. 4. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 43

Fate threw me to your sword — You spar'd my youth,
 And in the very whirl and rage of fight
 Your eye was taught compassion — from that hour
 I vow'd my life the slave of your remembrance ;
 And often, as *Cristina*, heav'nly maid !
 The mistress of my service, question'd me
 Of wars and vent'rous deeds, my tidings came
 Still freighted with thy name, until the day
 In which yourself appear'd, to make praise speechless.
Cristina saw you then, and on your fate
 Dropp'd a kind tear ; and when your noble scorn
 Of proffer'd terms provok'd her father's rage
 To take the deadly forfeit ; she, she only,
 Whose virtues watch'd the precious hour of mercy,
 All trembling, sent my secret hand to save you ;
 Where, thro' a pass unknown to all your keepers,
 I led you forth, and gave you to your liberty.

Gust. O I am sunk, o'erwhelm'd with wondrous goodness ;

But were I rich and free as open mines
 That teem their golden wealth upon the world,
 Still I were poor, unequal to her bounty.
 Nor can I longer doubt whose gen'rous arm
 In my *Arvida*, in my friend's deliverance,
 Gave double life, and freedom to *Gustavus*.

Laer. A fatal present ! Ah, you know him not ;
Arvida is misled, undone by passion ;
 False to your friendship, to your trust unfaithful.

Gust. Ha ! hold !

Laer. I must unfold it.

Gust. Yet forbear :

This way — I hear some footing — pray you soft —
 If thou hast aught to urge against *Arvida*,
 The man of virtue, tell it not the wind ;
 Lest slander catch the sound, and guilt should triumph.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

Arvida entering speaks to a soldier.

Arr. He's here — bear back my orders to your fellows,
 That

44 GUSTAVUS VASA, Act 3.

That not a man, on peril of his life,
Advance in fight till call'd.

Sold. My Lord, I will——

Arv. Have I not vow'd it, faithless as he is,
Have I not vow'd his fall? Yet, good heav'n!
Why start these sudden tears? On, on I must,
For I am half-way down the dizzy steep,
Where my brain turns—A draught of *Lethe* now——
O that the world wou'd sleep——to wake no more!
Or that the name of friendship bore no charm
To make my nerve unsteady, and this steel
Flee backward from its task!——It shall be done.——
Empire! *Cristina*! tho' th' affrighted sun
Start back with horror of the direful stroke,
It shall be done. Calm, calm the hell within,
Thy looks may else turn traitors—Ha, he comes!
How steadily he looks, as heav'n's own book,
The leaf of truth, were open'd on his aspect.
Up, up, dark minister——his fate calls out

[*Puts up the dagger.*]

To nobler execution; for he comes
In opposition, singly, man to man,
As tho' he brav'd my wish.

SCENE VI.

Enter Gustavus.

[*They look for some time on each other——Arvida
lays his hand on his sword, and withdraws it by
turns——then advances irresolutely.*]

Gust. Is it then so?

Arv. Defend thyself.

Gust. No——strike——

I would unfold my bosom to thy sword,
But that I know the wound you give this breast
Would doubly pierce thy own.

Arv. I know thee not——

It is the time's eclipse, and what should be

Sc. 6.

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In nature, now is nameless.

Gust. Ah, my brother !

Arv. What wouldst thou ?

Gust. Is it thus we two should meet ?

Arv. Art thou not false ? Deep else, O deep indeed
Were my damnation.

Gust. Dear, unhappy man !

My heart bleeds for thee. False I'd surely been,
Had I like thee been tempted.

Arv. Ha ! speak, speak,
Didst thou not send to treat with *Cristiern* ?

Gust. Never.

I know thy error, but I know the arts,
The frauds, the wiles that practise'd on thy virtue ;
Firm how you stood, and tow'r'd above mortality ;
Till in the fond unguarded hour of love,
The wily undermining *Trollio* came,
And won thee from thyself — a moment won thee —
For still thou art *Arvida*, still the man
On whom thy country calls for her deliv'rance.
Already are her bravest sons in arms ;
Mark how they shout, impatient of our presence,
To lead them on to a new life of liberty,
To name, to conquest — Ha, heav'n guard my brother,
Thy cheek turns pale, thy eye is wild upon me,
Wilt thou not answer me ?

Arv. *Gustavus* !

Gust. Speak.

Arv. Have I not dream'd ?

Gust. No other I esteem it.

Where lives the man whose reason slumbers not ?
Still pure, still blameless, if at wonted dawn
Again he wakes to virtue.

Arv. O, my dawn
Must soon be dark. Confusion dissipates,
To leave me worse confounded.

Gust. Think no more on't.

Come to my arms, thou dearest of mankind !

Arv. Stand off ! pollution dwells within my touch.
And horror hangs around me — Cruel man !
O, thou hast doubly damn'd me with this goodness ;

For

For resolution held the deed as done ;
 That now must sink me — Hark ! I'm summon'd hence,
 My audit opens ! Poise me ! for I stand
 Upon a spire, against whose sightless base
 Hell breaks his wave beneath. Down, down I dare not,
 And up I cannot look, for justice fronts me —
 Thou shalt have vengeance, tho' my purpling blood
 Were nectar for heav'n's bowl, as warm and rich,
 As now 'tis base, it thus should pour for pardon.

[Gustavus catches his arm, and in the struggle the dagger falls.]

Gust. Ha ! hold, *Arvida* — No, I will not lose thee —
 Forbid it heav'n ! thou shalt not rob me so ;
 No, I will struggle with thee to the last,
 And save thee from thyself. Oh, answer me !
 Wilt thou forsake me ? answer me, my brother,
 My best *Arvida*.

Arv. I wou'd speak to thee —

But let it be by silence — Oh *Gustavus* !

Gust. Say but you'll live.

Arv. Oh !

Gust. For my sake.

Arv. Yes, take me ;

Expose me, cage me, brand me for the tool
 Of crafted villains, for the veriest slave,
 On whom the bend of each contemptuous brow
 Shall look with loathing. Ah, my turpitude
 Shall be the vile comparative of knaves
 To boast and whiten by !

Gust. Not so, not so.

Who knows no fault, my friend, knows no perfection.
 The rectitude that heav'n appoints to man
 Leads on thro' error ; and the kindly sense
 Of having stray'd, endears the road to bliss ;
 It makes heav'n's way more pleasing ! O my brother,
 'Tis hence a thousand cordial charities
 Derive their growth, their vigour, and their sweetness.
 This short lapse
 Shall to thy future foot give cautious treading,
 Erect and firm in virtue.

Arv. Give me leave.

[Offers to pay
Gust.

Gust.

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Gust. You shall not pass.

Arv. I must.

Gust. Whither ?

Arv. I know not — O *Gustavus* !

Gust. Speak.

Arv. You can't forgive me.

Gust. Not forgive thee !

Arv. No.

Look there.

[*Points to the dagger.*]

And yet when I resolv'd to kill thee,

I cou'd have died — indeed I cou'd — for thee,

I cou'd have died, *Gustavus* !

Gust. O I know it.

A gen'rous mind, tho' sway'd a while by passion,

Is like the steely vigour of the bow,

Still holds its native rectitude, and bends

But to recoil more forceful. Come forget it.

S C E N E VII.

Enter a Dalecarlian.

Dale. My Lord, as now I pass'd the mountain's brow,
I spy'd some men, whose arms and strange attire
Give cause for circumspection.

Gust. *Danes*, perhaps ;

Haste, intercept their passage to the camp. [*Exit Dal.*]

Arv. Those are the *Danes* that witness to my shame.

Gust. Perish th' opprobrious term ! not so, *Arvida* ;
Myself will be the guardian of thy fame ;

Trust me, I will — Our friends approach — O clear

While I attend them, clear that cloud, my brother,

That sits upon the morning of thy youth ;

It hangs too near the heart of thy *Gustavus*. [*Exit.*]

Arv. Of thy *Gustavus* ! O wretch, wretch, curs'd
wretch !

What is this time and place, and toys of circumstance ;

That wind our actions, so, as heav'n's own hand

What's done may not unravel ? — Pardon may ! —

There's the *Lethean* sweet, the snow of heav'n,

New

New blanching o'er the *Negro* front of guilt,
 That to the eye of mercy all appears
 Fair as th' unwritten page — yet self-convict,
 Tho' heav'n's free pow'r shou'd pardon, where's my
 peace?

Thus, thus to be driven out from my own breast!
 To have no shed, no shelt'ring nook at home
 To take reflection in! How looks the wretch
 Whose heart cries villain to itself? I'll not
 Endure its batt'ry — Somewhat must be done
 Of high import ere night, that I may sleep,
 Or wake for ever.

S C E N E VIII.

Enter Gustavus followed by the Dalecarlians, Anderson, Arnoldus, Sivard, officers, &c.

1st *Dale*. Let us all see him!

2d *Dale*. Yes, and hear him too.

3d *Dale*. Let us be sure 'tis he himself.

4th *Dale*. Our general.

5th *Dale*. And we will fight while weapons can be
 found.

6th *Dale*. Or hands to wield them.

7th *Dale*. Get on the bank, *Gustavus*.

And. Do, my Lord.

Gust. My countrymen! —

1st *Dale*. Ho! hear him.

2d *Dale*. Peace!

3d *Dale*. Peace!

4th *Dale*. Peace!

Gust. Amazement I perceive hath fill'd your hearts,
 And joy for that your lost *Gustavus*, 'scap'd
 Thro' wounds, imprisonments, and chains, and deaths,
 Thus sudden, thus unlook'd for stands before ye.
 As one escap'd from cruel hands I come,
 From hearts that ne'er knew pity; dark and vengeful:
 Who quaff the tears of orphans, bathe in blood,
 And know no music but the groans of *Sweden*.

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Gust.
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Yet, not for that my sister's early innocence,
And mother's age now grind beneath captivity ;
Nor that one bloody, one remorseless hour
Swept my great fire, and kindred from my side ;
For them *Gustavus* weeps not, tho' my eyes
Were far less dear, for them I will not weep.
But, O great parent, when I think on thee !
Thy numberless, thy nameless, shameful infamies,
My widow'd country ! *Sweden* ! when I think
Upon thy desolation, spite of rage —
And vengeance that would choak them — tears will flow.

And. O, they are villains, ev'ry *Dane* of them,
Practis'd to stab and smile ; to stab the babe
That smiles upon them.

Arn. What accursed hours
Roll o'er those wretches, who to fiends like these
In their dear liberty have barter'd more
Than worlds will rate for ?

Gust. O Liberty, heav'n's choice prerogative !
True bond of law, thou social soul of property,
Thou breath of reason, life of life itself !
For thee the valiant bleed. O sacred liberty !
Wing'd from the summer's snare, from flatter'd ruin,
Like the bold stork you seek the wint'ry shore,
Leave courts, and pomps, and palaces to slaves,
Cleave to the cold, and rest upon the storm.
Upborn by thee, my soul disdain'd the terms
Of empire — offer'd at the hands of tyrants.
With thee, I fought this fav'rite soil ; with thee,
These fav'rite sons I fought ; thy sons, O Liberty.
For ev'n amid the wilds of life you lead them,
Lift their low rafted cottage to the clouds,
Smile o'er their heaths, and from their mountain-tops
Beam glory to the nations.

All. Liberty ! liberty !

Gust. Are ye not mark'd, ye men of *Dalecarlia*,
Are ye not mark'd by all the circling world
As the great stake, the last effort for liberty ?
Say, is it not your wealth, the thirst, the food,
The scope and bright ambition of your souls ?
Why else have you, and your renown'd forefathers,

E

From

From the proud summit of their glitt'ring thrones,
 Cast down the mightiest of your lawful kings
 'That dar'd the bold infringement? what, but liberty
 Thro' the fam'd course of thirteen hundred years,
 Aloof hath held invasion from your hills,
 And sanctify'd their shade? — And will ye, will ye
 Shrink from the hopes of the expecting world;
 Bid your high honours sloop to foreign insult,
 And in one hour give up to infamy
 The harvest of a thousand years of glory?

1st *Dale*. No.

2d *Dale*. Never, never.

3d *Dale*. Perish all first!

4th *Dale*. Die all!

Gust. Yes, die by piecemeal!

Leave not a limb o'er which a *Dane* may triumph!
 Now from my soul I joy, I joy, my friends,
 'To see ye fear'd; to see that ev'n your foes
 Do justice to your valours! — There they be,
 'The pow'rs of kingdoms, summ'd in yonder host,
 Yet kept aloof, yet trembling to assail ye.
 And O, when I look round and see you here,
 Of number short, but prevalent in virtue,
 My heart swells high and burns for the encounter.
 'True courage but from opposition grows;
 And what are fifty, what a thousand slaves,
 Match'd to the sinew of a single arm
 That strikes for liberty? that strikes to save
 His fields from fire, his infants from the sword,
 His couch from lust, his daughters from pollution;
 And his large honours from eternal infamy?
 What, doubt we then? shall we, shall we stand he
 Till motives that might warm an ague's frost,
 And nerve the coward's arm, shall poorly serve
 'To wake us to resistance? — Let us on!
 O, yes, I read your lovely fierce impatience!
 You shall not be with-held; we will rush on them
 This is indeed to triumph, where we hold
 Three kingdoms in our toil! is it not glorious, —
 Thus to appall the bold, meet force with fury,
 And push yon torrent back, till ev'ry wave

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3d *Dale*.

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3d Dale. On, lead us on, *Gustavus*; one word more
but delay of conquest.

Gust. Take your wish.

He who wants arms, may grapple with the foe,
and so be furnish'd. You, most noble *Anderson*,
divide our pow'rs, and with the fam'd *Olaus*
take the left route—You, *Eric*, great in arms!

With the renown'd *Nederbi*, hold the right,
and skirt the forest down; then wheel at once,
confess'd to view, and close upon the vale:

Myself, and my most valiant cousin here
th' invincible *Aroida*, gallant *Sivard*,
Arnoldus, and these hundred hardy vet'rans,
will pour directly on, and lead the onset.

Oy, joy, I see confess'd from ev'ry eye,
our limbs tread vigorous, and your breasts beat high!

Thin tho' our ranks, tho' scanty be our bands,
bold are our hearts, and nervous are our hands.

With us, truth, justice, fame, and freedom close,
each singly equal to an host of foes,

feel, I feel them fill me out for fight,
they lift my limbs as feather'd *Hermes* light!

Or like the bird of glory, tow'ring high,
thunder within his grasp, and lightning in his eye!

A C T IV.

S C E N E, *before the camp.*

Enter Cristiern, Trollio, and Attendants.

Crst. **Y** Our observation's just, I see it, *Trollio*:
Men are machines, with all their boasted
freedom,

their movements turn upon some fav'rite passion;
let art but find the latent foible out,

we touch the spring, and wind them at our pleasure.

Troll. Let heav'n spy out for virtue, and then
starve it:

But vice and frailty are the statesman's quarry,
 The objects of our search, and of our science;
 Mark'd by our smiles, and cherish'd by our bounty.
 'Tis hence, you lord it o'er your servile senates;
 How low the slaves will stoop to gorge their lusts
 When aptly baited: ev'n the tongues of patriots
 (Those sons of clamour) oft relax the nerve
 Within the warmth of favour.

Crist. How else should kings subsist? for what is
 pow'r,

But the nice conduct of another's weakness?
 That thing call'd virtue is the bane of government,
 A libel on the state, that asks suppression;
 It has a hateful and unbending quality;
 It serves no end, still restive to the rein,
 And to the spur unspeedy: They who boast it
 Are traitors, rivals of their king, my *Trollio*,
 And, wanting other subjects, greatly dare
 To lord it o'er themselves. Such is *Gustavus*,
 If yet he be——

And such *Arvida* was; tho' now, I trust,
 He is too far advanc'd in our designs
 To think of a retreat.

Troll. Impossible!
 Already has he leap'd the guilty mound
 That might appall his virtue; for the world
 He dare not now look back; where shame pursues,
 And cuts off all retreat.

SCENE II.

Enter Gentleman Usher and Peterfon, who kneels.

Gent. My Liege, Lord *Peterfon*.

Crist. Rise to our trust, most worthy *Peterfon*;
 Rise to our friendship: By my head I swear,
 Bar but our *Trollio* here, there's not a *Swede*
 Who holds thy valu'd level in our heart!
 For thou'rt unshaken, tho' thy nation swerve;
 Faithful among the faithless,

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Peter

Peter. What I am,
Let this inform your Majesty. [Gives a packet.]

Troll. A packet !
Whence had you that, my friend ?

Peter. Even from the hands
Of the once great *Gustavus*.

Crist. Then you have seen him. Tell me, tell me,
*Peter*son,

What said he ? Eh ! How look'd the mighty rebel ?
His means, his scope, the pride of his presumption,
Give me the whole !

Peter. Last night, my gracious Lord,
While yet I held your messenger in conference ;
Arriv'd, who brought a letter from *Gustavus*,
Wherein, digesting many flagrant terms
Of mutinous import against the state
Of your high dignity ; by morning-light
He pray'd me to attend him ; boasting much
Of plenteous hopes, and means of boldest enterprise,
Of this I gave you notice ; and ere dawn
Set out for fresh intelligence — I came ;
I saw him shrunk, that glory of the north,
Soil'd with the vileness of a slave's attire ;
Where, in the depth and darkness of the mines,
For six long months he hath not seen the sun ;
Colleagu'd with circling horrors ; hourly toil
Hath been his watch, and penury his earning ;
But like the lion, newly broke from bonds,
The mingling passions from his eyes dart glory ;
Pride lifts his stature, and the opening front
Still looks dominion.

Crist. Who were his adherents ?

Peter. The traitor *Anderson*, and a few friends,
To whom, ere I set out, he stood reveal'd.
And when I seem'd to question on his pow'rs
Of rivalship, the props whereon he meant
To lift contention to the princely front
Of such high opposition ; he reply'd,
His powers were near your person.

Crist. How ! what's here ? [Looks on the packet.]

Peter. To *Laurens*, *Aland*, *Haquin*, and *Roderic*,

Confusion ! Treason's in our camp ! Who's there ?

Gent. My Liege !

Crist. Bear this to *Norbi* —— Bid him seize
[*Gives a signet.*]

The *Swedish* captains.

Troll. Might I but presume —

Crist. I will not be control'd — bid him seize all,
Soldiers and chiefs ! By hell, there's not a *Swede*,
But lurks an instrument to prompt rebellion,
And plots upon my life ! Look there, 'tis evident :

[*Gives Trollio a letter.*]

They are all leagu'd, confed'rate with *Gustavus*,
Th' abettors of his treason.

Troll. It shou'd seem so :

And yet it shou'd not — Tell me, *Peter*son,
Art thou assur'd thy credit with *Gustavus*
Will answer to a trust like this ? — Ha ! say.

Peter. Yes, well assur'd : my zeal appear'd too warm
To give the least cold colour for suspicion.

Troll. I fear, my friend, I fear he has o'er-reach'd you.
Divide and conquer, is the sum of politics.

Beyond the dreaded circle of his sword,
Gustavus triumphs in an ample genius ;
He walks at large, sees clear and wide around him ;
Calm in the storm and turbulence of action ;
He ponders on the last event of things,
And makes each cause subservient to the consequence.

Crist. You over-rate his craft ; they're false, my

Trollio,

False ev'ry *Swede* of them ; I read their souls.

SCENE III.

Enter Cristina and Mariana.

Cristina. I heard it was your royal pleasure, Sir,
I shou'd attend your Highness.

Crist. Yes, *Cristina*,
But business intererers.

SCENE

S C E N E IV.

Enter an Officer.

Off. My Sovereign Liege!
Wide o'er the western shelving of yon hill,
We think, tho' indistinctly, we can spy,
Like men in motion must'ring on the heath;
And there is one who saith he can discern
A few of martial gesture, and bright arms,
Who this way bend their action.

Crist. Friends, perhaps,
For foes it were too daring — Hasten thee, *Trollio*,
Detach a thousand of our *Danish* horse
To rule their motions — We will out ourself,
And hold our pow'rs in readiness — Lead on.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E V.

Enter Cristina and Mariana.

Mar. Ha! did you mark, my Princess, did you mark?
Shou'd some reverse, some wondrous whirl of fate
Once more return *Gustavus* to the battle,
New nerve his arm, and wreath his brow with
conquest;

Say, wou'd you not repent that e'er you sav'd
This dreadful man, the foe of your great race;
Who pours impetuous in his country's cause
To spoil you of a kingdom?

Cristina. No, my friend.
Had I to death or bondage sold my fire,
Or had *Gustavus* on our native realms
Made hostile inroad; then, my *Mariana*!
Had I then sav'd him from the stroke of justice,
I shou'd not cease my suit to heav'n for pardon.
But if, tho' in a foe, to reverence virtue,
Withstand oppression, rescue injur'd innocence,

Step

Step boldly in betwixt my fire and guilt,
 And save my king, my father from dishonour ;
 If this be sin, I have shook hands with penitence.
 First, perish crowns, dominion, all the shine
 And transience of this world, ere guilt shall serve
 To buy the vain incumbrance.

Mar. Do not think
 I meant, my Princess, to arraign your virtues,
 Howe'er I seem'd to question on the consequence.

Cristina. The consequence of virtue must be good :
 It must. Tho' it shou'd prove my father's lot,
 In being rescu'd from one act of guilt,
 To lose the whole of all his wide dominions,
 He were a gainer — Blasted be that royalty,
 Which murder must make sure, and crimes inglorious !
 The bulk of kingdoms, nay, the world is light,
 When guilt weighs opposite — O wou'd to heav'n,
 The loss of empire wou'd restore his innocence,
 Restore the fortunes and the precious lives
 Of thousands fall'n the victims of ambition !

SCENE VI.

Enter Laertes.

Ha ! *Laertes* ! most welcome ! well — and have you ? say,

Laertes.

Laer. O royal maid ! —

Cristina. Thy looks are doubtful — Speak, —
 Why art thou silent ? — Does he live ?

Laer. He does,
 But death ere night must fill a long account ;
 The camp, the country's in confusion : War
 And changes ride upon the hour that hastes
 To intercept my tongue — I else cou'd tell
 Of virtues hitherto beyond my ken ;
 Courage, to which the lion stoops his crest,
 Yet grafted upon qualities as soft
 As a rock'd infant's meekness ; such as tempts
 Against my faith, my country, and allegiance,

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To with thee speed, *Gustavus*.

Cristina. Then you found him !

Laer. I did : and warn'd him, but in vain ; for death
To him appear'd more grateful than to find
His friend's dishonour.

Cristina. Give me the manner — quick — soft,
good *Laertes* !

S C E N E VII.

Enter Cristiern, Trollio, Peterson, Danes, &c.

Crist. Damn'd ! double traitor ! O curs'd, false
Arvida !

Guard well the *Swedish* pris'ners, bind them hard —
Stand to your arms — Bring forth the captives there !

S C E N E VIII.

Enter Augusta and Gustava guarded.

Troll. My Liege —

Crist. Away ! I'll hear no more of politics ;
Fortune ! we will not trust the changeling more ;
But wear her girt upon our armed loins,
Or pointed in our grasp.

S C E N E IX.

Enter an Officer.

Off. The foe's at hand.

With gallant shew your thousand *Danes* rode forth,
But shall return no more ! — I mark'd the action,
A band of desp'rate resolute rush'd on 'em,
Scarce numb'ring to a tenth, and in mid way
They clos'd ; the shock was dreadful, nor your *Danes*
Cou'd bear the madd'ning charge ; a while they stood,

Then

Then shrunk, and broke, and turn'd — When, lo, behind,
Fast wheeling from the right and left there pour'd,
Who intercepted their return, and caught
Within the toil they perish'd.

Crist. 'Tis *Gustavus* !

No mortal else, not *Ammon*'s boasted son,
Not *Cæsar* wou'd have dar'd it. Tell me, say,
What numbers in the whole may they amount to ?

Off. About five thousand.

Crist. And no more ?

Off. No more,

That yet appear.

Crist. We count six times their sum. —

Haste, soldier, take a trumpet, tell *Gustavus*
We have of terms to offer, and wou'd treat
Touching his mother's ransom ; say, her death,
Suspended by our grace, but waits his answer.

[*Exit Officer.*

Madam, it shou'd well suit with your authority,

[*To Augusta.*

To check this frenzy in your son — Look to it,
Or by the saints this hour's your last of life !

Ag. Come, my *Gustava*, come, my little captive,
We shall be free ; our tyrant is grown kind ;
And for these chains that bind thy pretty arms,
The golden cherubim shall lend thee wings,
And thou shalt mount amid the smiling choir
Of little heav'nly songsters, like thyself,
All robed in innocence.

Gustava. Will you go, mother ?

Ag. So help me, mercy ! Yes, I'll go, my child ;
And I will give thee to thy father's fondness,
And to the arms of all thy royal race
In heav'n ; who sit on thrones, with loves, and joys,
And pleasures smiling round.

Crist. Is this my answer ?

Come forth, ye ministers of death, come forth.

S C E N E

S C E N E X.

Enter Russians, who seize Augusta and Gustava.

Pluck them asunder ! We shall prove you, Lady !
'Tis my damn'd lot, thus ever to be cross'd
With rank blown pride, and insolence eternal.

Gustava. O mother, take me, take me from these
men,
They fright me with their looks.

Augusta. Alas, my child, I cannot take thee from
them.

Gustava. O, they will hurt me : can't you take me,
mother ?

Augusta. They can't, they cannot hurt you, my
Gustava.

Fear not, my little one, your name shou'd be
A charm o'er cowardice, for you are call'd
After your valiant brother ; he'll disown you,
He will not love you, if you fear, *Gustava.*

Cristina. Ah ! I can hold no longer. Royal Sir,
Thus on my knees, and lower, lower still —

Crist. My child ! what mean you ?

Cristina. O my gracious father !
Kill, kill me rather — let let me perish first ;
But do not stain the sanctity of kings
With the sweet blood of helpless innocence ;
Do not, my father ! spare the little orphans,
And let the lambs go free !

Augusta. Ha ! who art thou ?
That look'st so like the habitants of heav'n,
Like mercy sent upon the morning's blush,
To glad the heart, and cheer a gloomy world
With light till now unknown ?

Crist. Away, they come.
I'll hear no more of your ill-tim'd petitions.

Cristina. O yet for pity !

Crist. I will none on't, leave me.
Pity ! it is the infant fool of nature :
Tear off her hold, and bear her to her tent.

[*Ex. Cristina, Mar. Laer, and Attendants.*

S C E N E

SCENE XI.

Enter an Officer.

Off. My Liege, *Gustavus*, tho' with much reluctance,
Consents to one hour's truce. His soldiers rest
Upon their arms, and follow'd by a few,
He comes to know your terms.

Crist. I see, fall back —

Stand firm — Be ready, slaves, and on the word
Plunge deep your daggers in their bosoms.

[*Points to Augustus*]

SCENE XII.

Enter Gust. Arv. Ander. Arn. Siv. &c.

Hold !

Gust. Ha ! 'tis, it is my mother !

Crist. Tell me, *Gustavus*, tell me why is this ?
That, as a stream diverted from the banks
Of smooth obedience, thou hast drawn those men
Upon a dry unchannell'd enterprise,
To turn their inundation ? — Are the lives
Of my misguided people held so light,
That thus thou'dst push them on the keen rebuke
Of guarded majesty ; where justice waits,
All lawful, and resistless, to assert
Th' impervious rights, the sanctitude of kings,
And blast rebellion ?

Gust. Justice ! sanctitude !

And rights ! O patience ! rights ! What rights, the
tyrant ?

Yes, if perdition be the rule of power ;
If wrongs give right ; O then, supreme in mischief !
Thou wert the lord, the monarch of the world !
Too narrow for thy claim. But if thou think'st
That crowns are vilely propertied, like coin,
To be the means, the specialty of lust,

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And sensual attribution——If thou think'st,
That empire is of titled birth, or blood ;
That nature in the proud behalf of one
Shall disenfranchise all her lordly race,
And bow her general issue to the yoke
Of private domination——then, thou proud one,
Here know me for thy king——Howe'er be told,
Not claim hereditary, not the trust
Of frank election ;

Not ev'n the high anointing hand of heav'n
Can authorise oppression ; give a law
For lawless pow'r ; wed faith to violation ;
On reason build misrule, or justly bind
Allegiance to injustice——Tyranny
Absolves all faith ; and who invades our rights,
Howe'er his own commence, can never be
But an usurper——But for thee, for thee
There is no name ! thou hast abjur'd mankind ;
Dash'd safety from thy bleak unsocial side,
And wag'd wild war with universal nature !

Grist. Licentious traitor ! thou canst talk it largely ;
Who made thee umpire of the rights of kings,
And pow'r, prime attribute ? As on thy tongue
The poise of battle lay, and arms, of force,
To throw defiance in the front of duty.
Look round, unruly boy, thy battle comes
Like raw, disjointed must'ring ; feeble wrath !
A war of waters borne against the rock
Of our firm continent, to fume, and chafe,
And shiver in the toil.

Gust. Mistaken man !
I come impower'd, and strengthen'd in thy weakness.
For tho' the structure of a tyrant's throne
Lies on the necks of half the suff'ring world ;
The world trembles in the cement : prayers and tears,
And secret curses sap its mould'ring base ;
And steal the pillars of allegiance from it ;
When, let a single arm but dare the sway,
Along it turns, and drives upon destruction.

Troll. Profane, and alien to the love of heav'n !
Art thou still harden'd to the wrath divine

That hangs o'er thy rebellion? — Know'st thou not
 Thou art at enmity with grace? cast out,
 Made an anathema, a curse inroll'd
 Among the faithful, thou and thy adherents
 Shorn from our holy church, and offer'd up
 As sacred to damnation?

Gust. Yes, I know,

When such as thou with sacrilegious hand
 Seize on the apostolic key of heav'n,
 It then becomes a tool for crafty knaves
 To shut out virtue, and unfold those gates,
 That heav'n itself had barr'd against the lusts
 Of avarice and ambition — Soft, and sweet,
 As looks of charity, or voice of lambs
 That bleat upon the morning, are the words
 Of Christian meekness! Mission all divine!
 The law of love sole mandate — but your gall,
 Ye *Swedish* prelacy! your gall hath turn'd
 The words of sweet, but indigested peace,
 To wrath and bitterness — Ye hallowed men!
 In whom vice sanctifies, whose precepts teach
 Zeal without truth, religion without virtue,
 Who ne'er preach heav'n but with a downward eye
 That turns your souls to dross; who shouting loose
 The dogs of hell upon us. Thefts, and rapes,
 Sack'd towns, and midnight-howlings thro' the realm
 Receive your sanction — O 'tis glorious mischief!
 When vice turns holy, puts religion on,
 Assumes the robe pontifical, the eye
 Of faintly elevation, blesteth sin,
 And makes the seal of sweet offended heav'n
 A sign of blood, a label for decrees,
 That hell wou'd shrink to own. —

Crist. No more of this.

Gustavus, wouldst thou yet return to grace,
 And hold thy motions in the sphere of duty,
 Acceptance might be found.

Crist. Imperial spoiler!

Give me my father, give me back my kindred,
 Give me the fathers of ten thousand orphans,
 Give me the sons in whom thy ruthless sword

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SC. 12. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 63

Has left our widows childless : Mine they were,
Both mine, and ev'ry *Swede's*, whose patriot-breast
Bleeds in his country's woundings ! O thou canst not.
Thou hast outfinn'd all reck'ning ! Give me then
My all that's left, my gentle mother there,
And spare yon little trembler !

Crist. Yes, on terms
Of compact, and submission.

Gust. Ha ! with thee ?
Compact with thee ! and mean'st thou for my country ?
For *Sweden* ! No — so hold my heart but firm,
Altho' it wring for't ; tho' blood drop for tears,
And at the sight my straining eyes start forth —
They both shall perish first.

Crist. Slaves, do your office.

Gust. Hold yet, — thou canst not be so damn'd ?
my mother !
I dare not ask thy blessing — Where's *Arvida* ?
Where art thou ? Come, my friend, thou'lt know
temptation —

And therefore best canst pity, or support me.

Arv. Alas ! I shall but serve to weigh thee downward,
To pull thee from the dazzling, fightless height,
At which thy virtue soars. For, O *Gustavus*,
My soul is dark, disconsolate, and dark ;
Sick to the world, and hateful to myself,
I have no country now ; I've nought but thee,
And shou'd yield up the int'rest of mankind,
Where thine's in question.

Agusta. See, my son relents ;
Behold, O King ! yet spare us but a moment ;
His little sister shall embrace his knees,
And these fond arms, around his duteous neck,
Shall join to bend him to us.

Crist. Cou'd I trust ye —

Arv. I'll be your hostage.

Crist. Granted.

Gust. Hold, my friend.

[*Here Arvida breaks from Gustavus, and passes to
Cristiern's party, while Agusta and Gustava go
over to Gustavus.*]

Agusta. Is it then giv'n, yet giv'n me, ere I die,
To see thy face, *Gustavus*? thus to gaze,
To touch, to fold thee thus! — My son, my son!
And have I liv'd to this? It is enough.
All arm'd, and in my country's precious cause
Terribly beauteous, to behold thee thus!
Why, 'twas my only, hourly suit to heav'n,
And now 'tis granted. O my glorious child,
Bless'd were the throes I felt for thee, *Gustavus*!
For from the breast, from out your swathing-bands
You stepp'd the child of honour.

Gust. O my mother!

Agusta. Why stands that water trembling in thy eye?
Why heaves thy bosom? Turn not thus away,
'Tis the last time that we must meet, my child,
And I will have thee whole. Why, why, *Gustavus*,
Why is this form of heaviness? For me
I trust it is not meant; you cannot think
So poorly of me: I grow old, my son,
And to the utmost period of mortality,
I ne'er shou'd find a death's hour like to this,
Whereby to do thee honour.

Gust. Roman patriots!

Ye *Decii* self-devoted to your country!
You gave no mothers up! Will annals yield
No precedent for this, no elder boast
Whereby to match my trial?

Agusta. No, *Gustavus*;
For heav'n still squares our trial to our strength,
And thine is of the foremost — Noble youth!
Ev'n I, thy parent, with a conscious pride,
Have often bow'd to thy superior virtues.
O, there is but one bitterness in death,
One only sting —

Gust. Speak, speak!

Agusta. 'Tis felt for thee.

Too well I know thy gentleness of soul,
Meking as babes; ev'n now the pressure's on thee,
And bends thy loveliness to earth — O, child!
The dear but sad foretaste of thy affliction

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4. SC. 12. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 65

Already kills thy mother — But behold,
Behold thy valiant followers, who to thee,
And to the faith of thy protecting arm
Have giv'n ten thousand mothers, daughters too;
Who in thy virtue yet may learn to bear
Millions of free-born sons to bless thy name,
And pray for their deliverer — O farewell!
This, and but this, the very last, adieu!
Heav'n fit victorious on thy arm, my son!
And give thee to thy merits!

Crist. Ah, thou trait'ers!

Gustava. O brother, an't you stronger than that man?
Don't let him take my mother.

Agusta. See, *Gustavus*,
My little captive waits for one embrace.

Gust. Come to my arms, thou lamb-like sacrifice;
O that they were of force to fold thee ever,
To let thee to my heart! there lock thee close,
And circle thee with life! But 'twill not be!

Gustava. I'll stay with you, my brother.

Gust. Killing innocence!
That I was born to see this hour!

The pains of hell are on me! — Take her, mother!

Gustava. I will not part with you, indeed, I will not!

Gust. Take her — Distraction! Haste, my dearest
mother:

Oh — else I shall run mad — quite mad, and save ye.

Arv. Hold, Madam: — Hear me, thou most dear

Gustavus!

Thus low I bend my pray'r, reject me not:

If once, if ever thou didst love *Arvida*,

O leave me here to answer to the wrath

Of this fell tyrant. Save thy honour'd mother,

And that sweet lamb from slaughter!

Gust. Cruel friendship!

Crist. And by my life I'd take thee at thy word,
Thou doubly damn'd! but that I know 'twou'd please
thee.

Agusta. No, gen'rous prince, thy blood shall never be
The price of our dishonour. Come, my child;

Weep not, sweet babe, there shall no harm come
nigh thee.

Crist. 'Tis well, proud dame; you are return'd, I see—
Each to his charge — Here break we off, *Gustavus*;
For to the very teeth of thy rebellion
We dash defiance back.

Gust. Alas, my mother!
Grief choaks up utterance, else I have to say
What never tongue unfolded — Yet return,
Come back, and I will give up all to save thee;
For on the cov'ring of thy sacred head
My heart drops blood. Thou fountain of my life!
Dearer than mercy is to kneeling penitence,
My early blessing, first and latest joy;
Return, return, and save thy lost *Gustavus*!

Crist. No more, thou trifler!

Agustia. O farewell for ever!

[*Exeunt Cristiern and his party. Gustavus and
his party remain.*]

Gust. Then she is gone — *Arvida! Anderson!*
For ever gone — *Arnoldus*, friends, where are ye?
Help here, heave, heave this mountain from me — O —
Heav'n keep my senses! — So — we will to battle;
But let no banners wave — Be still thou trump!
And ev'ry martial sound that gives the war
To pomp or levity; for vengeance now
Is clad with heavy arms, sedately stern,
Resolv'd, but silent as the slaughter'd heaps
O'er which my soul is brooding.

Arn. O *Gustavus*!

Is there a *Swede* of us, whose sword and soul
Grapples not to thee, as to all they hold
Of earthly estimation? said I more,
It were but half my thought.

And. On thee we gaze,
As one unknown till this important hour;
Pre-eminent of men!

Siv. Accurs'd be he,
Who, in thy leading, will not fight, and strive,
And bleed, and gasp with pleasure!

And. We are thine;

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Sc. I. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 67

All, all, both we and ours; whom thou this day
Hast dearly purchas'd.

Arn. Tho', to yield us up,
Had scarce been less than virtue.

Gust. O my friends!

I see, 'tis not for man to boast his strength
Before the trial comes — This very hour,
Had I a thousand parents, all seem'd light
When weigh'd against my country; and but now,
One mother seem'd of weight to poize the world;
Tho' conscious truth and reason were against her.
For, O, howe'er the partial passions sway,
High heav'n assigns but one unbiafs'd way;
Direct thro' ev'ry opposition leads,
Where shelves decline, and many a steep impedes.
Here hold we on — tho' thwarting fiends alarm;
Here hold we on — tho' devious *Syrens* charm;
In heav'n's disposing pow'r events unite,
Nor aught can happen wrong to him who acts aright.

A C T V.

S C E N E, the Royal Tent:

Enter Cristina and Mariana.

Cristina. **H**ark! *Mariana,* list! — No — All is
silent — —

It was not fancy sure — didst thou hear aught?

Mar. Too plain, the voice of terror seiz'd my ear,
And my heart sinks within me.

Cristina. O, I fear
The war is now at work — As winds, methought,
Long borne thro' hollow vaults, the sound approach'd;
One sound, yet laden with a thousand notes
Of fearful variation; then it swell'd
To distant shouts, now coming on the gale;
Again borne backward with a parting groan,
All sunk to horrid stillness.

Mar. Look, my Princess,

Ah!

Ah, no ! with-hold thy eyes ! the place grows dark,
A sudden cloud of sorrow stains the day,
And throws its gloom around.

SCENE II.

Enter four slaves as bearing the bodies of Augusta and Gustava on a bier covered——four women in chains follow weeping.

Cristina. Whence are ye, say, you daughters of affliction?
Their speech is in their tears — Avert, ye faints !
Avert that thought ! Soft ! hold ye ! I've a tear
For ev'ry mourner — Ah ! [*Looks under the covering.*]

Mar. What mean you, Madam ?

Cristina. Reflection come not there ! See it not, eyes !
How art thou split, thou blood of royalty !
Close at the paleness of its parent breast
The babe lies slaughter'd. Tell me, who did this ?
No, hold ye ! Say not that my father did it ;
For duty then turns rebel — Cruel father !
O, that some villager, whose early toil
Lifts the penurious morsel to his mouth,
Had claim'd my birth ! Ambition had not then
Thus stept 'twixt me and heav'n.

Mar. Go, bear it hence ——
Turn, turn, my royal mistress !

Cristina. Ah, *Augusta* !
Among thy foes thou'rt fall'n, thou'rt fall'n in virtue !
Exalt thyself, O guilt ! For here the good
Have none who may lament them. Sit we down ;
For I grow weary of the world ; let death
Within his vaulty durance, dark and still,
Receive me too ; and where th' afflicted rest,
There fold me in for ever.——

SCENE III.

Enter Laertes.

Laer. Arise, *Cristina* ; fly ! thou royal virgin!

This

Sc. 3. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 69

This morn beheld thee mistress of the North,
Bright heir of *Scandinavia* ; and this hour
Has left thee not, throughout thy wide dominions,
Whereon to rest thy foot.

Cristina. Now, praise to heav'n !
Say but my father lives !

Laer. At your command
I went ; and, from a neighb'ring summit, view'd
Where either host stood adverse, sternly wedg'd ;
Reflecting on each other's gloomy front,
Fell hate and fix'd defiance—When at once
The foe mov'd on, attendant to the steps
Of their *Gustavus*—He with mournful pace
Came slow and silent ; till two hapless *Danes*
Prick'd forth, and on his helm discharg'd their fury :
Then rous'd the lion ! To my wond'ring sight
His stature grew twofold, before his eye
All force seem'd wither'd, and his horrid plume
Shook wild dismay around ; as heav'n's dread bolt,
He shot, he pierc'd our legions ; in his strength
His shouting squadron gloried, rushing on
Where-e'er he led their battle—Full five times,
Hemm'd by our mightier host, the foe seem'd lost,
And swallow'd from my sight ; five times again
Like flame they issued to the light—And thrice
These eyes beheld him, they beheld *Gustavus*
Unhors'd, and by a host girt singly in ;
And thrice he broke thro' all.

Cristina. My blood runs chill.

Laer. With such a strenuous, such a labour'd conflict,
Where never field was fought ! until *Gustavus*
Aloud cry'd, Victory ! and on his sp ear
High rear'd th' imperial diadem of *Denmark*.
Then slack'd the battle ; then recoil'd our host ;
His echo'd, Victory ! and now would know
No bounds ; rout follow'd, and the face of fight—
—She heeds me not.

Cristina, O, ill-starr'd royalty !
My father ! cruel, dear, unhappy father !
Common'd so sudden ! fearful, fearful thought !
Up in, sweet mercy ! For thy time was—Ha

S C E N E

SCENE IV.

Enter Cristiern flying without his helmet, in disorder his sword broke, and his garments bloody; he throws away his sword, and speaks.

Crist. Give us new arms of proof—fresh horses—
quick!

A watch without there—Set a standard up
To guide our scatter'd powers! Haste, my friends, haste!
We must be gone—O for some cooling stream
To slake a monarch's thirst!

Laer. A post, my Liege,
A second post from *Denmark* says—

Crist. All's lost.

Is it not so? begone! Perdition choak thee—
Give me a moment's solitude—Thought, thought,
Where wou'dst thou lead?

Cristina. He sees me not—Alas, alas, my father!
O, what a war there lives within his eye!
Where greatness struggles to survive itself.
I tremble to approach him; yet I fain
Wou'd bring peace to him—Dont you know me, Sir?
My father, look upon me, look, my father!
Why strains your lip, and why that doubtful eye
Thro' fury melting o'er me? Turn, ah, turn!
I cannot bear its softness—How? nay, then,
There is a falling dagger in that tear,
To kill thy child, to murder thy *Cristina*.

Crist. Then thou'rt *Cristina*?

Cristina. Yes.

Crist. My child!

Cristina. I am.

Crist. Curse me! then, curse me! Join with heav'n
and earth,

And hell to curse!

Cristina. Alas! on me, my father,
Thy curses be on me, but on thy head
Fall blessings from that heav'n which has this day
Preserv'd thy life in battle

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Crist. What have I
To do with heav'n ? damnation ! What am I ?
All frail and transient as my laps'd dominions !
E'en now the solid earth prepares to slide
From underneath me. Nature's pow'r cries out,
Leave him, thou universe ! — No — Hold me heav'n !
Hold me, thou heav'n ! whom I've forsaken — hold
Thy creature, tho' accurs'd !

Cristina. Patience and peace
Possess thy mind ! Not all thy pride of empire
E'er gave such bless'd sensation, as one hour
Of penitence, tho' painful — Let us hence —
Far from the blood and bustle of ambition.
Be it my task to watch thy rising wish,
To smooth thy brow, find comfort for thy cares,
And for thy will, obedience ; still to cheer
The day with smiles, and lay the nightly down
Beneath thy slumbers.

Crist. O thou all that's left me !
Ev'n in the riot, in the rage of fight,
Thy guardian virtues watch'd around my head,
When else no arm could aid — for thro' my ranks,
My circling troops, the fell *Gustavus* rush'd ;
Vengeance ! he cry'd, and with one eager hand
Grip'd fast my diadem — his other arm,
High rear'd the deathful steel — suspended yet ;
For in his eye, and thro' his varying face,
Conflicting passions fought — he look'd — he stood
In wrath reluctant — Then, with gentler voice ;
Cristina, thou hast conquer'd ! Go, he cry'd,
I yield thee to her virtues.

S C E N E V.

Enter Trollio and guards, swords drawn.

Troll. Hasten, O King !
The foe has hemm'd us round ; O hasten to save
Thyself and us !

Crist.

Crist

Crift. Thy sword. *[Takes a sword from one of the guards.]*

Troll. What means my —

Crift. Villain!

Well thought, by hell! Ha! Yes, — thou art our minister,
The rev'rend monitor of vice — the foil,
Baneful and rank with ev'ry principle,
Whence grow the crimes of kings. First perish thou!

[Stabs him.]

Who taught the throne of pow'r to fix on fear,
And raise its safety from the public ruin;
Fall thou into the gulf thyself hast fix'd
Between the prince and people; cutting off
Communion from the ear of royalty,
And mercy from complaint — Away, away,
Thy death, old man, be on thy monarch's head;
On thine, the blood of all thy countrymen,
Who fell beneath thy counsels.

[Exeunt.]

Trollio attempts to rise, and then speaks.

Troll. Thou bloody tyrant! late, too late I find,
Nor faith, nor gratitude, nor friendly trust,
No force of obligations can subsist
Between the guilty — O, let none aspire
To be a king's convenience! Has he virtues,
Those are his own; his vices are his minister's.
Who dares to step 'twixt envy and the throne,
Alike to feel the caprice of his prince,
As public detestation. — Ha! I'm going,
But whither? No one near! to feel! to catch!
The world but for an instant! for one ray
To guide my soul! her way grows wondrous dark,
And down, down, down!

[Dies.]

SCENE VI.

Enter Gustavus, Anderson, Arnoldus, Sivard, &c. in triumph. Gustavus advances, and the rest range themselves on each side of the stage.

Gust. That we have conquer'd, first we bend to heav'n!

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All. To thee, to thee, *Gustavus* !

Gust. No, matchless men ! my brothers of the war !
Be it my greatest glory to have mix'd
My arms with yours, and to have fought for once
Like to a *Dalecarlian* ; like to you,
The fires of honour, of a new-born fame,
To be transmitted, from your great memorial,
To climes unknown, to age succeeding age,
Till time shall verge upon eternity,
And patriots be no more —

Arn. Behold, my Lord,
The *Danish* pris'ners, and the traitor *Peterfon*,
Attend their fate.

Gust. Send home the *Danes* with honour,
And let them better learn, from our example,
To treat whom next they conquer, with humanity.

And. But then for *Peterfon* !

Gust. His crimes are great :
A single death were a reward for treason :
Let him still languish — Let him be exil'd,
No more to see the land of liberty,
The hills of *Sweden*, nor the native fields
Of known, endear'd idea.

And. Royal Sir,
This is to pardon, to encourage villains ;
And hourly to expose that sacred life,
Where all our safety centers.

Gust. Fear them not.
The fence of virtue is a chief's best caution ;
And the firm surety of my people's hearts
Is all the guard that e'er shall wait *Gustavus*.
I am a soldier from my youth ; yet, *Anderfon*,
These wars, where man must wound himself in man,
Have somewhat shocking in them : trust me, friend,
Except in such a cause as this day's quarrel,
I wou'd not shed a single wretch's blood
For the world's empire !

Arn. O exalted *Sweden* !
Bless'd people ! Heav'n ! wherein have we deserv'd
A man like this to rule us ?

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SCENE VII.

Enter Arvida leading in Cristina. He runs to Gustavus.

Gust. My *Arvida* !

Arv. My King ! O hail ! Thus let me pay my
homage. [*Kneels.*]

Gust. Rise, rise, nor shame our friendship.

Arv. See, *Gustavus* ! Behold, nor longer wonder at
my frailty.

Gust. Be faithful eyes ! Ha ! Yes, it must be so.
'Tis she — For heav'n would chuse no other form
Wherein to treasure ev'ry mental virtue.

Cristina. Renown'd *Gustavus* ! mightiest among men
If such a wretch, the captive of thy arms,
Trembling and aw'd in thy superior presence,
May find the grace that ev'ry other finds,
For thou art said to be of wondrous goodness !
Then hear, and O excuse a foe's presumption !
While low, thus low you see a suppliant child,
Now pleading for a father, for a dear,
Much lov'd ; if cruel, yet unhappy father.
O, let him 'scape, who ne'er can wrong thee more.
If he with circling nations could not stand
Against thee single ; singly, what can he,
When thou art fenc'd with nations ?

Gust. Ha ! that posture !

O rise — surpris'd, my eye perceiv'd it not.

Cristina ! thou all form'd for excellence !

I've much to say, but that my tongue, my thoughts
Are troubled ; warr'd on by unusual passions.

'Twas hence thou hadst it in thy power to ask,

Ere I could offer — come, my friend, assist,

Instruct me to be grateful. O *Cristina* !

I fought for freedom, not for crowns, thou fair one,

They shall sit brighter on that beauteous head,

Whose eye might awe the monarchs of the earth,

And light the world to virtue — My *Arvida* !

Arv. O great and good, and glorious to the last !
I read thy soul, I see the gen'rous conflict,

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Sc. 7. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 75

And come to fix, not trouble thy repose.
 Cou'd you but know with what an eager haste
 I sprung to execute thy late commands ;
 To shield this lovely object of thy cares,
 And give her thus, all beauteous to thy eyes !
 For I've no blifs but thine, have lost the form
 Of ev'ry wish that's foreign to thy happiness.
 But, O, my King ! my conq'ror ! my *Gustavus* !
 It grieves me much that thou must shortly mourn,
 Ev'n on the day in which thy country's freed,
 That crowns thy arms with conquest and *Cristina*.

Gust. Alas ! your cheek is pale — You bleed, my
 brother !

Arv. I do indeed — to death.

Gust. You have undone me :

Rash, headstrong man ! O was this well, *Arvida* ?
 [Turns from him.

Arv. Pardon, *Gustavus* ! mine's the common lot,
 The fate of thousands fall'n this day in battle.
 I had resolv'd on life, to see you blest'd ;
 To see my King and his *Cristina* happy.
 Turn, thou belov'd, thou honour'd next to heav'n !
 And to thy arms receive a penitent,
 Who never more shall wrong thee.

Gust. O *Arvida* !

Friend ! friend ! [Turns and embraces him.

Arv. Thy heart beats comfort to me ! in this breast,
 Let thy *Arvida*, let thy friend survive.
 O, strip his once lov'd image of its frailties,
 And strip it too of ev'ry fonder thought,
 That may give thee affliction — do, *Gustavus* ;
 It is my last request ; for heav'n and thou
 Art all the care and business — of *Arvida*. [Dies.

Gust. Friend ! brother ! speak — He's gone — and
 here is all

That's left of him who was my life's best treasure.
 How art thou fall'n, thou greatly valiant man !
 In ruin graceful, like the warrior-spear
 Tho' shiver'd in the dust — so fall *Gustavus* —
 But thou art sped, hast reach'd the goal before me ;
 And one light lapse throughout thy course in virtue

Shews only thou wert man, ordain'd to strive,
But not attain perfection.——

Dost thou too weep, transcendant, loveliest maid !
Pardon a heart o'ercharg'd with swelling grief,
'That in thy presence will not be exil'd,
'Tho' ev'ry joy dwells round thee.

Crist. O Gustavus !

A bosom pure like thine must soon regain
The heart-felt happiness that dwells with virtue ;
And heav'n on all exterior circumstance
Shall pour the balm of peace, shall pay thee back
The bliss of nations, breathing on thy head
The sweets that live within the pray'rs of foes
Subdu'd unto thy merits — fare, farewell !

Gust. Thou shalt not part, Cristina.

Cristina. O —— I must ——

*Gust. No, thou art all that's left to sweeten life,
And reconcile the wearied to the world.*

Cristina. It will not be —— I dare not hear ——

Gust. You must.

I am thy suppliant in my turn — But O
My suit is more, much more than life or empire,
Than man can merit, or worlds give without thee.

*Cristina. Now aid me, aid me all ye chaster pow'rs
That guard a woman's weakness ! — 'tis resolv'd ——
'Thy own example charms thy suit to silence.
Nor think alone to bear the palm of virtue,
Thou, who hast taught the world, when duty calls,
To throw the bar of ev'ry wish behind them.
Exalted in that thought, like thee I rise,
While ev'ry less'ning passion sinks beneath me.
Adieu, adieu, most honour'd, first of men,
I go, I part, I fly, but to deserve thee.*

*Gust. Yet stay —— a moment —— till my utt'ring heart
Pour forth in love, in wonder pour before thee,
Thou cruel excellence —— Wou'dst thou too leave me ?
'Not if the heart, the arms of thy Gustavus,
Have force to hold thee.*

Cristina. O delightful notes !

That I do love thee, yes, 'tis true, my Lord.
The bond of virtue, friendship's sacred tie,

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SC. 7. the DELIVERER of his COUNTRY. 77

The lover's pains, and all the sister's fondness,
 Mine has the flame of ev'ry love within it.
 But I have a father, guilty if he be,
 Yet is he old ; if cruel, yet a father.
 Abandon'd now by ev'ry supple wretch
 That fed his years with flattery, I am all
 That's left to calm, to sooth his troubled soul,
 To penitence, to virtue ; and perhaps
 Restore the better empire o'er his mind,
 True seat of all dominion— Yet, *Gustavus*,
 Yet there are mightier reasons— O farewell !
 Had I ne'er lov'd, I might have staid with honour. [*Exit.*]

Gustavus looks after Crislina, then turns and looks on Arvida. — Anderson, Arnoldus, &c. advance.

And. Behold, my Lord, behold the sons of war
 Of triumph, turn'd to tears ; while from that eye
 All *Sweden* takes her fate ; and smiles around,
 Or weeps with her *Gustavus*.

Arn. Wilt thou not cheer them, say thou great
 deliv'rer ?

Siv. O general !

1st *Dale.* King !

2d *Dale.* Brother !

3d *Dale.* Father !

All. Friend !

Gust. Come, come, my brothers all ! Yes, I will
 strive

To be the sum of ev'ry title to ye,
 And you shall be my fire, my friend reviv'd,
 My sister, mother, all that's kind and dear,
 For so *Gustavus* holds ye — O I will
 Of private passions all my soul divest,
 And take my dearer country to my breast.
 To public good transfer each fond desire,
 And clasp my *Sweden* with a lover's fire.
 Well pleas'd, the weight of all her burdens bear ;
 Dispense all pleasure, but ingross all care.
 Still quick to find, to feel my people's woes,
 And wake that millions may enjoy repose.

A TRAG-

A TRAGI-COMIC EPILOGUE,

By way of ENTERTAINMENT.

By Mr OGLE.

Intended for Mr *Wright*, Mrs *Giffard*, and
Mrs *Clive*.

Mr WRIGHT.

Well, Ladies, to the court, your plea submit,
Box, upper region, gallery, and pit.
Our poet, trembling for his first essay,
Fear'd to dismiss you, tho' you sav'd his play.
Cry'd Nell (in pity for the bashful rogue)
"Give 'em a joke! a joke was once in vogue,!"
"Thus authors us'd, in less judicious times,
"When merry epilogues were thought no crimes."
"That (said Cristina) wou'd his ruin crown;
"Nothing but virtue takes this virtuous town.
"No! let his epilogue be clean and chaste.
"This is the sense of ev'ry man of taste! —
High rose the conflict in our room of state;
Where tragic kings and queens maintain debate.
When, lo! we heard, "your powers began to rise,"
Whose horrid cat-call is our worst excise!
Our inmost palace felt the loud dissension;
Where each new tragedy's a new convention.
Whence we determin'd, without further pother,
To give you, of the one, and of the other.



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Mrs GIFFARD.

*Our author on the brave and chaste relies;
He thinks the virtuous are the only wise.
And, if his muse, with voice exalted, sings
Of camps and courts, of ministers and kings;
Yet be not to the great his rules confin'd!
His moral is a lesson to mankind.
If virtue, beauteous; vice, deform'd, he draws:
You that applaud him, sound your own applause.
Where vice, distaste, where virtue, gives delight,
Alike, who judge or paint, are just and right.*

*Virtue, like vice, escapes the public eye,
In humble life, yet blazes in the high.
Hence, tragedy, that owns no vulgar flight,
Shines, with the king, in a mild sphere of light,
Or vagrant, with the tyrant, strains to run,
A burning comet! not a cheering sun!
That worth is worth, be by Gustavus known:
More glorious in a mine, than on a throne!
And for Cristina might I hope a smile,
Less great was she in empire, than exile!
Some worth it shows to aim at worthy praise. —
Then wither not the plant that you may raise!
Crush not his youth! No! give him age to spread!
For we have heard you rumbling o'er his head.
Fell a few flashes, with portentous blaze,
To blast th' ambitious branches of his bays;
Yet, if soft sorrows stream'd from virtuous eyes,
If rose from gen'rous breasts regaling sighs:
Refresh'd by the attack, the laurel stands,
And dares the loudest thunder — of your hands.*

Mrs CLIVE.

*Great the design! — I grant — the moral good!
But, 'tis my weakness, I am flesh and blood.
What virgin, here, so tender, and so kind,
Wou'd not her love with her own hands unbind?
Preliminaries settle in the dark?
And tho' she lost her father, fix her spark?*

Or,

Or, when she bade th' attendant, " Save him ! Fly ! "
Wou'd she not send a billet by the by ?
Not article ? 'Tis nonsense to say. Not !
Had she no feel, no guess, of what is what ?
At her expense, the great Gustavus shines ;
My lover, he ! — I'd send him to his mines. —
Arvida falls ! — Gustavus wails his end !
And many a spouse caresses such a friend.
Well, let him wail his death ; then rise to life :
Clasp the fond maid, too strict to be his wife !
He held her in his camp ; might hold alone :
Compulsion some humanity had shown.
Thy countrymen — will damn thee — thy third day —
This is not, sure, the true Hibernian way !
But I forgive him. He's a young beginner !
Not quite a prostitute ! and yet a sinner !
Forward to please ! yet awkward to delight !
He wants a kindly hand to guide him right !
A novice yet — Instruct him — He will mend —
Full many a widow wishes such a friend !
Ev'n marry'd dames may think a greater curse
The slow performer, that grows worse and worse !
This, with a blush, I say, behind my fan —
Cherish the boy, you'll raise him to a man !

MR WRIGHT.

The cause is heard. Ye gentle, and ye brave,
'Tis yours to damn him — But you join to save —
Then, hail Gustavus, who his country freed !
Ye sons of Britain, praise the glorious Swede !
Who bravely rais'd, and generously releas'd,
From blood-stain'd tyrant, and perfidious priest,
The state and church, expiring at a breath !
Who held a life of slav'ry worse than death !
Reform'd religion ! re-establish'd law !
*— And, that you dare to praise him, hail * Nassau !*

* The deliverer of our country.



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